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EUROPE & PACIFIC

VEEKENI



Trade deadline, tight division races on deck in 2nd half

Back page

STARS STRIPES.



British warship thwarts Iranians

Officials: Boats trying to stop tanker dispersed after 'verbal warnings'

By Joshua Karsten Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — A British frigate prevented three Iranian patrol boats from stopping a British tanker as it was entering the Strait of Hormuz, British and U.S. defense officials said Thursday.

Thursday.

The HMS Montrose "ensured the safe passage" of the tanker British Heritage, U.K. Defense Secretary Penny Mordaunt said

in a statement Thursday.
"I would like to thank the Royal
Navy for their professionalism,
which upheld international law
and supported freedom of navigation through a shipping channel that is vital to global trade,"
Mordaunt said.

The Montrose reportedly maneuwered between the three fast boats — believed to belong to Iran's Revolutionary Guard and the tanker near the island of Abu Musa on Wednesday. The Iranian vessels turned away after "verbal warnings" from the frigate, said a separate British government statement cited by BBC News.

"We are concerned by this action and continue to urge the Iranian authorities to deescalate the situation in the region," Mordaunt said.

U.S. Central Command officials said they were aware of the incident.

SEE TANKER ON PAGE 4

MILITARY

第3種郵便物設可

Steroids found in products at Air Force base

By John Vandiver Stars and Strines

Two dietary supplements sold at an Air Force base in Georgia have tested positive for steroids during a health probe, according to military investigators.

The products were discovered at Moody Air Force Base during a health and wellness inspection in December 2018.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service said 5 Star Nutrition has blocked the sale of the products "Alpha Shredded"

and "Trenatestin" on military installations.

The nutrition stores are located at seven Army and Air Force bases: Fort Hood, Fort Bliss and Joint Base San Antonio in Texas; Fort Riley, Kan.; Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark.; Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.; and Moody Air Force Base, Mo.

"If a product is determined to be unsuitable as to quality, value or other appropriate criteria by medical authorities, AAFES and its concessionaires take immediate action to remove it from shelves," AAFES spokesman Chris Ward said in a statement.

The investigation was conducted by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, which shared its findings with other military units in a bulletin that warned: "Supplements Sold at AAFES Exchanges May Contain Steroids."

The suspected products were seized and submitted for laboratory testing, according to a July 3 alert from Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID

"Soldiers may find a false sense

of security when purchasing performance enhancing supplements from a legitimate and reputable business, even a business located at an AAFES Exchange," stated the CID alert, which was posted on the popular military social media site Army WTF Moments. CID confirmed the document's

authenticity.

The Food and Drug Administration doesn't test or approve dietary supplements before they are sold.

As a result, military services and their exchange stores have struggled for many years to keep up with the variety of potentially dangerous substances. The supplement OxyElite Pro Super Thermogenic was pulled from bases in 2011 after it was found to contain ingredients suspected in the deaths of two soldiers at Fort

Since then, weight loss and muscle-building supplements sold on base have been found to have substances closely related to Prozac and methamphetamine, among others, before being pulled from shelves.

Army to pay additional \$1.2 million for noise reduction at Stuttgart area range

By John Vandiver Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany
The U.S. Army has agreed to pay
an additional \$1.2 million to cover
the costs of a project to lower noise
levels at a suburban Stuttgart firing range where frustrated locals
have long complained about the
crackle of gunfire.

In 2018, the Army reached a deal with town officials in Boeblingen to split the cost of the project, with the city paying up to \$340,000 toward it and the garrison covering the rest.

Since then, the estimated cost has jumped from \$800,000 to \$2.3 million, the U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart said. The Army agreed after talks with officials in Boeblingen to absorb all of the additional expense, the garrison

announced Thursday.

"The city of Boeblingen and USAG Stuttgart recently formalized the arrangement in a written agreement," the garrison said in a statement.

The project involves erecting new noise barriers that are expected to provide better sound-proofing at the range. Work is slated to begin in the summer of 2020 and wrap up by mid-2021, the garrison said.

The garrison also has taken over as the lead of the Army's working group on the more than a decade-old noise issue, which in the past had been managed by 7th Army Training Command in Grafenwoehr.

"Reasoning behind [U.S. Army Europe's] decision to reassign the project was that the garrison is best positioned to work effectively with the local community on the resolution of the issue," the garrison said.

The Stuttgart area is home to various elite military units that fall under the command of U.S. Special Operations Command Europe. While the firing range at garrison headquarters' Panzer Kaserne is small and less frequently used than facilities in more rural Army outposts, the sound of gunfire nonetheless has been an irritant in neighborhoods abutting the Boeblingen facility.

The military also has agreed to scale back some of their highintensity training in Boeblingen and conduct more drills at Army ranges in Grafenwoehr and Baumbolder.

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Passage of command

Retiring United States Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller, left, presents the Marine colors to Gen. David Berger, who became the 38th commandant of the Corps during a passage of command ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington on Thursday. At right is Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Ronald L. Green.

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ICHIRO KATAYANAGI

PACIFIC

USS Ronald Reagan sailors enjoy time off in Australia

By Caitlin Doornbos Stars and Strings

BRISBANE, Australia — Sailors from the USS Ronald Reagan are back at sea after wrapping up a port call in Australia, their first of 2019.

The aircraft carrier and its crew of 4,500 spent five days at the Port of Brisbane following a bumpy start. The 103,000-ton ship ran into a crane Friday as tug boats pulled it into port.

A section of the ship struck a crane on the pier, Task Force 70 spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Matt Knight said Saturday. The incident caused minor damage to the Ronald Reagan and spilled hydraulic fluid on the pier. The cause of the incident, or allision, is under investigation, Knight said.

The damage included a bent railing, which was fixed before the carrier left Brisbane on Wednesday, according to the Navy.

The ship stopped in Brisbane to give its sailors a short break before joining in Talisman Sabre drills. The biennial exercise involves more than 34,000 U.S. and Australian military personnel, and 2019 marks its eighth iteration, according to a July 5 Navy statement.

Eager to stretch their land legs, sailors participated in community service, tourism and libations while in Brisbane.

Volunteer groups visited patients at Queensland Children's Hospital and Mater Private Hospital Rehab and spent time at Queensland Maritime Museum and Queensland Museum and Science Centre, where they toured a NASA exhibit marking the 50th anniversary of the moon landing, Knight said.

Some groups had distinctly Down Under experiences, spending time with local wildlife while helping with gardening, maintenance and food preparation at Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary and Daisy Hill Koala Conservation Park, Knight said.

Others planted "bush tucker" plants at Australian Catholic University, Knight said. The term describes foods native to Australia such as mistletoe, bush coconut, eucalyptus and conkerberry, according to the Mbantua Aboriginal Art Gallery and Cultural Museum in Australia's Northern

On their own, some sailors trekked farther into northeastern Australia, booking winery tours and rainforest hikes through New South Wales. Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation also arranged golf sessions, desert safari tours, scuba diving and snorkeling opportunities and theme park visits.

In central Brisbane, sailors enjoyed nightlife in the city that met its visitors with open arms, lighting up its famed Story Bridge in red, white and blue.

Tourism Queensland Industry Council chief executive Daniel Gschwind estimated the sailors spent about \$700 each in Brisbane during their brief stay.

"Some hospitality businesses made an effort to promote their services specifically to the US visitors, with creative name for drinks and menu items," Gschwind said in an email. "Bris bane prides itself on its friendly and welcoming attitude to visiton to U.S. sailors."

Many family and friends flew in from the U.S. and Japan to see their sailors for the first time since the ship left Yokosuka Naval Base on May 22. Other loved ones excitedly posted to social media over the weekend, bragging about receiving their first phone calls and videos from their servicemembers in nearly seven weeks.

Navy wife Lexi Rusk, who is



Courtesy of U.S. Consulate General Sydney

USS Ronald Reagan sailors visit a patient while spending a day off at Queensland Children's Hospital in Brisbane, Australia, on Saturday.

4½ months pregnant, flew from Yokosuka to see her husband, Seaman Jered Rusk, a gunner's mate. She said the visit was made special when she felt the baby's first kick as her husband stood

by.
"Perfect timing," she said. "I enjoyed every single second [of Brisbane] and am beyond grateful I got to experience it with the one that I love.

Navy mom Michelle Stragier McCrave flew in from Virginia to surprise her daughter, Lt. Victoria McCrave, an EA-18G Growler co-pilot on the Ronald Reagan. She was joined by her husband, Michael McCrave, and other daughter, Brianne McCrave, as well as Victoria's husband.

"I was a Navy wife. It's harder Tw

being a [Navy] mom," Stragier McCrave said.

On Wednesday, the family drove to a Sunshine Coast beach to see the carrier off. They bid farewell holding a 3-yard-long canvas sign that lightheartedly said, "familia del jefe" — Spanish for "family of the boss," Stragier McCrave said.

"I got teary seeing the ship go out," Stragier McCrave said. "Brianne said it was a very emotional moment."

Talisman Sabre is expected to run through early August, with most training activities taking place through July 24, according to the Australian Department of Defence.

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HIMARS rocket artillery blasts Australia's Outback during drills



ASHLEY MALDONADO/Courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

By SETH ROBSON Stars and Stripes

High-Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, will train with Marines in Darwin, Australia, after participating in this month's Talisman Sabre exercise Down Under, according to the Marine Corns.

A platoon from the Okinawabased 12th Marine Regiment brought three HIMARS launchers to Australia for the monthlong, biennial drills involving 34,000 U.S. and Australian troops.

"The HIMARS is a highly mobile artillery rocket system," 12th Marines commander Col. Mike Roach said in a phone interview from Australia on Thursday, "It's light and it's air transportable but it's all-weather capable and provides a range up to [186 miles]."

On Monday, 50 Marines teamed up with the Air Force, Australian army and Royal Australian Air Force to practice inserting the launchers into an expeditionary air base before conducting livering the conducting in coordination with ground and amphibious forces, Roach said.

Air Force C-130J cargo planes out of Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, and KC-130s out of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in mainland Japan flew the launchers into Williamson Airfield in the Australian state of Oueensland.

The launchers conducted live-

fire training with reduced-range practice rounds, but the capability of the HIMARS wasn't lost on Australian troops who watched them in action, Roach said.

"All the folks out there were very impressed at what it can do," he said.

The rocket artillery has participated in Talisman Sabre in past years. It has also seen service in Afghanistan and Iraq, where it struck insurgents up to 50 miles from where launchers were based, Roach said.

In an area as large as the Pacific, the rocket artillery provides commanders with the range to go after time-sensitive targets, he said.

After the exercise, the launchers will move to Australia's Northern Territory, where 2,500 Marines are training over the summer as part of Marine Rotational Force-Darwin, Roach said.

"The HIMARS are taking advantage of the opportunity that Australia provides," he said.

The sparsely populated con-

tinent with its massive military training areas is a contrast to the Marines' home on Okinawa, where military bases take up much of the island, causing friction with some locals.

The HIMARS will conduct training in Darwin in August, Roach said.

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Iran tensions have US allies unsure of tactics

The Washington Post

第3種郵便物設可

DUBAL United Arab Emirates

- For years, U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf have pushed Washington to get tough on Iran. But now, with the prospect of war on the rise, they're not so clear about what they want.

Many Arab officials and analysts in the gulf are looking to the United States to be even more forceful in deterring Iran — and also more careful about provoking it. Given mixed signals from the Trump administration, some in the region are a little nervous and are sending conflicting signals of their own.

The escalating tensions in the Persian Gulf have exposed differences between the United States and its regional allies, in part over how aggressively the Trump administration should confront

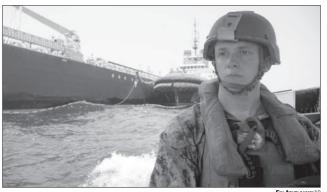
Washington and its allies in the ulf, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, see Iran and its network of proxy forces as the primary threat in the region and have worked together to cripple Iran's economy through sanctions and to isolate its leadership.

But at the same time, the United States and Arab allies differ over the usefulness of negotiations in resolving the crisis and the role these nations should play in ensuring their own security. diplomats say.

Even among the U.S.-allied gulf countries, there is little consensus on how best to confront Iran. With those countries likely to find themselves on the front lines of any military conflict with Iran, some of the smaller states are hesitant to support the more combative stance of the United States and regional heavyweights Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The result has been conflicting public and private statements from both U.S. and regional diplomats. The remarks, analysts say, are evidence of a deeper struggle among allies over the contours of a U.S.-led policy that many officials and analysts here think could lead to war

In response to recent attacks on commercial tankers near the Strait of Hormuz, the United



The Panama-flagged, Japanese-owned oil tanker Kokuka Courageous, which the U.S. says was damaged by an Iranian limpet mine, is seen behind a U.S. sailor during a recent trip organized by the U.S. Navy for journalists off Fujairah, United Arab Emirates. Persian Gulf nations have been uncertain about how to proceed amid growing tensions with Iran.

States squarely blamed Iran. Most gulf countries, however, have refrained from publicly saying Iran is the culprit and instead have called for dialogue and restraint

"Honestly, we can't point the blame at any country because we don't have evidence," the UAE's foreign minister, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan, said last month of attacks on four tankers off the UAE port city of Fujairah.

"If there is a country that has the evidence, then I'm convinced that the international community will listen to it." he said. "But we need to make sure the evidence is precise and convincing.'

Nahyan's remarks confused and alarmed U.S. diplomats in the region.

Tensions have risen sharply after the Trump administration withdrew last year from the landmark nuclear deal with Iran and reimposed economic sanctions In response, Iran has announced in recent weeks that it is breaching a pair of limits on enriched

Some officials and analysts in

the region worry that the U.S. strategy of "maximum pressure" on Iran - which the administration says is intended to force Iran to negotiate a new nuclear deal and give up its ballistic missile program and - exposes Persian Gulf nations to the risk of a conflict but without solid security guarantees.

recent weeks, President Donald Trump has asked publicly why the United States should be responsible for securing the Persian Gulf shipping lanes, noting on Twitter last month that other countries are far more dependent on oil from the region. He has urged allies to take a larger role in safeguarding maritime assets.

"Trump is again questioning the U.S. role as security guar antor in their region. The gulf countries are in a tight spot," said Henry Rome, a Middle East analyst at the New York-based Eurasia Group, a political risk firm.

In Saudi Arabia and the UAE some commentators criticized Trump's reluctance to carry out a military strike against Iran after it shot down a U.S. Navy spy drone over the Strait of Hormuz last month. Trump's subsequent call for negotiations with Iran without preconditions was also a source of frustration for some in the region because Iran could see the abrupt reversal as a sign of weakness, diplomats and analysts said. In a column published by Arab

News, a daily newspaper linked to the Saudi government, analyst Mohammed al-Sulami called on the United States to "avoid the middle ground on Iran."

Saudi Arabia and Iran have long been adversaries in the region, and their rivalry has often played out with devastating consequences in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria

When the United States and other world powers negotiated the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, curbing its atomic energy activities in exchange for major sanctions relief, gulf states "felt abandoned" by the Obama administration, said Sanam Vakil, a senior research fellow at Chatham House. a London-based think tank.

For gulf nations such as Saudi

ain would face "consequences"

over the seizure of the Iranian

The incident adds to the es-

calating tensions between Iran

and allied nations operating in

the Persian Gulf. Washington

has strengthened its sanctions

against Tehran and sent addition-

al troops and assets to the region,

including a carrier strike group.

of a new, hawkish U.S. adminis-tration has provided a welcome opportunity to contain Iran in a way that was impossible under the previous president," the European Council on Foreign Rela-

tions said in a recent policy note. But Sulami, who heads the International Institute for Iranian Studies in Riyadh, said in his column that the absence of a consistent, forceful response by the United States has contributed "to Iran continuing its operations. One option for dealing with Tehran, he wrote, would be "to wage an attack beyond the Iranian regime's expectation through a preemptive military operation.

Such an attack would paralyze all the Iranian regime's military capabilities and ensure that it could not retaliate with its full might," Sulami wrote.

Though Saudi officials have not openly called for a military camnaign against Iran, the kingdom's leaders have been the most forceful in condemning what they say are Iran's "aggressive policies."

In a recent interview with the Paris-based France 24 news network, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir refused to rule out a military response to what he said were Iranian provocations, among which he included recent drone and missile attacks on Saudi infrastructure by Iranallied rebels in Yemen.

"I believe that anything that can be done to increase the pressure on Iran to change its policies should be done," Jubeir said.



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an amphibious ready group and Stars and Stripes reporter Chad Garland contributed to this report.

Tanker: Royal Navy gave verbal warnings, pointed guns hani said on Wednesday that Brit-

tanker.

FROM FRONT PAGE

"Threats to international freedom of navigation require an international solution," CENTCOM spokesman Capt. Bill Urban said in a statement.

Although Urban's statement did not specifically comment on the details of the incident, he added that "the world economy depends on the free flow of commerce, and it is incumbent on all nations to protect and preserve this lynchpin of global prosperity."

Other U.S. officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said Wednesday's incident occurred as the British Heritage was approaching the northern entrance of the Strait of Hormuz.

"The Royal Navy HMS Montrose, which was also there, pointed its guns at the boats and warned them over radio, at which point they dispersed," said a U.S. official quoted by The Associated Press.

"It was harassment and an attempt to interfere with the passage," another official said, according to the AP.

One-fifth of the world's oil and 90% of Persian Gulf oil is transported through the strait.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard denied on Thursday that its vessels had tried to seize the tanker.

ters with foreign vessels, including the British ones," the force said in a statement carried by the semi-official Fars news agency. However, U.S. officials said

that a U.S. aircraft was overhead and recorded the incident, CNN reported Thursday. CENTCOM declined to confirm the aircraft's presence when reached by Stars and Stripes.

The incident comes a week after British marines seized an Iranian tanker off the coast of Gibraltar on suspicion of violating sanctions and transporting oil to Syria.

Iranian President Hassan Rou-

karsten.joshua@stripes.com Twitter: @joshua_karsten

B-52 bombers.

MILITARY

Army chief of staff: Keep troops in Afghanistan

By Caitlin M. Kenner

WASHINGTON — Withdrawing American troops from Afghanistan too soon would be a mistake, Army Gen. Mark Milley told senators Thursday, saying the U.S. military is needed to ensure the Afghan representatives and the Taliban reach a settlement to end the war that has dragged on for nearly 18 years.

"I think it is slow, it's painful, it's hard. I've spent a lot of my life in Afghanistan, but I also think it's necessary," he said during his confirmation hearing to become the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Milley, the Army's chief of staff, was nominated in April to be the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, replacing Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, who will serve through September after having been the chairman since 2015.

During the hearing, Milley was questioned about his responsibility to give his best advice to President Donald Trump as the chairman, which is the highest-ranking officer in the military and is the primary military adviser to the president, defense secretary and the National Security Council.

Sen. Angus King, I-Maine, asked Milley whether he would be intimidated.

"Absolutely not. By no one. Ever," the

general responded and said he and other officers such as Dunford who have seen combat and buried soldiers understand the hazards of their chosen profession.

"And we are not going to be intimidated into making stupid decisions. We will give our best military advice regardless of consequences to our self." he said.

Sendiors raised concerns about the Defense Department having more than a dozen vacancies in key leadership roles — including an acting defense secretary and whether not having confirmed leaders in those jobs weakens the civilian and military relationship, as well as sends a bad message to allies and adversaries.

"In terms of the effectiveness and the efficiency of the department, it would be much better to have the nominees fully vetted and confirmed because that gives us much more effectiveness," Milley said about civilian control of the military.

"I am very much in favor of getting them through the process and getting them confirmed."

Sen. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., asked Milley whether he would commit to working with her to address sexual assault in the military.

McSally's question followed reports Wednesday of sexual misconduct allegations against Air Force Gen. John Hyten, the nominee to become the next vice chair-



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday, Milley has been nominated to become the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

CARLOS BONGIOANNI Stars and Stripes

man of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

McSally also cited the task force that she set up with Dunford and former acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan to improve investigations and judicial processes as well as commander involvement regarding military sexual assault. A military investigation found insufficient evidence to charge Hyten or punish him administratively, according to a report by The Associated Press.

Milley thanked the senator for her efforts and called sexual assault "fratricide" by one soldier on another.

It is "a cancer within an organization and we've got to crush it," he said. "I think the solution resides with the commanders, empowerment of the commanders and holding them accountable."

Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., also asked kenn

Milley whether news reports were true that Dunford is planning to build a coalition of nations to deter Iranian threats to shipping in the Persian Gulf. Milley said he was aware of the developments and negotiations but he was not a personal participant in the coalition-building effort.

McSally also brought up an attempt Wednesday by members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps to stop a British tanker entering the Strait of Hormuz. Milley said he had heard about it and the attempt was stopped because "the British had a military escort, so that took care of the situation."

Milley said they are planning for the coalition to provide similar naval escort efforts for commercial shipping and it will be developing over the next couple of weeks.

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War/Military

NDAA provision on clean water draws veto threat

By Caitlin M. Kenney Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Art Schaap owns a dairy farm near Cannon Air Force Base outside Clovis, N.M. that he said has been contaminated with a chemical that has been leaking from the base into the ground.

The chemical, called perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl, or PFAS, is a substance commonly found in firefighting foam often used during training on military bases across the country and has been cited in news reports in recent years as the cause of contamination of nearby groundwater.

Schaap said Wednesday that the contamination from the Air Force base has damaged his farm. He cannot sell any milk or his cows, and he's lost 40 employees, putting his family and business in distress. Schaap said he needs \$2 million to install filters on 20 wells on his farm and another \$500,000 yearly to maintain them.

"We've lost our income, we

lost the value of our animals. My bank is looking at me every day," Schaap said during a conference call with reporters.

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., was also on the conference call Wednesday touting his bill in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 020 that expands the Air Force's authority to provide drinking water to surrounding communities to include water for agriculture and farmers, such as Schaap. The Udall provision was added to the Senate's version of the NDAA with a modified version included in the House version of the legislation.

But President Donald Trump is threatening to veto the NDAA over several provisions being delegislation, including Udall's attempt to help farmers get cleaner water.

Udall called the president's veto threat "outrageous."

"(Trump) is threatening to veto the national defense bill because it tries too hard to clean up Department of Defense's toxic waste that is imperiling America's drinking water and farmers businesses and way of life," the senator said during the conference call coordinated by Environmental Working Group, a nonprofit organization that focuses on environment issues.

A White House statement issued Tuesday lists several dozen amendments to the House's version of the NDAA and states that as the legislation is now written, Trump would be advised to veto it. Two amendments in the White House statement pertain to PFAS.

Studies have shown exposure to the chemical can cause increased cholesterol levels and have offered some findings related to low infant birth weight, cancer and impacts to the immune system in humans, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

One amendment in the House NDA a bill authorizes the Defense Department to provide water or water treatment for agricultural water that has been contaminated by perfluorooctanesulfonic acid, known as PFOS, or perfluorooctanoic acid, known as PFOA, which are PFAS chemicals.

More than 100 military sites across the country have known PFAS contamination in the drinking or groundwater, Udall said.

"The concentration of PFAS detected in the groundwater below Cannon Air Force Base next to Mr. Schaap's dairy [farm]

exceeded 2000 parts per trinion, the senator said. "That's 371 times greater than the U.S. EPA drinking water health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion."

The White House objected to this amendment, saying the EPA's drinking water health advisory was not applicable because it was not meant to determine unhealthy levels of PFOS and PFOA chemicals in agricultural water as well as the effects on human who consumed food that was produced with the agricultural water it also objected to singling out the Defense Department for the contamination issue because it would have a significant impact on and cost to the department.

Udall called the White House's claim that the military is only a small part of the contamination problem "flat out wrong" because the exposure to the chemical around installations that used the firefighting foam repeatedly in large quantities is more concentrated.

"All the activity was done on the Air Force bases," he said. "I don't know who they're claiming is a part of this."

The military has known that PFAS is toxic since the 1970s, said Scott Faber, senior vice president of government affairs at the Environmental Working Group.

"Even though they knew for decades ... that fluorinated firefighting foams pose serious human health risks, the military continued to use PFAS firefighting foam in training exercises," he said.

Udall said he believes he has bipartisan support for this issue in Congress and called on the military to be better neighbors.

"I find it appalling their behavior, and I expect them to do a lot better by their neighbors



Courtesy of the O.S. Army Corps of Engineer.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers geologist Brian Shedd researches PFAS soil contamination in February. President Donald Trump has threatened to veto the defense spending bill over a measure that would expand the Air Force's authority to address contamination from leaks at its bases.

who have been very, very good to them," he said. "I mean the neighboring communities have been welcoming, they help the Air Force bases. We need to see the same kind of respect from the leadership."

Reps. Dan Kildee, D-Mich., and Madeleine Dean, D-Pa., also objected to the president's veto threat in a joint statement Wednesday.

"Vetoing this bill would not only hurt servicemembers and families affected by PFAS contamination but would delay funding for our military, jeopardizing our national security," according to the statement. "We will continue to fight to clean up toxic PFAS chemicals and take care of servicemembers and veterans."

The Senate passed its version of the NDAA in June with a funding topline of \$750 billion. The House's version is heading to the floor to be debated Wednesday with a total funding of \$733 billion, a \$17 billion difference from the Senate.

After that, Congress must consolidate the two bills into one and pass it before the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30. Both chambers routinely take a monthlong recess in August.

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US peace envoy to Afghanistan in Beijing for meeting

By Christopher Bodeen
Associated Press

BEIJING — The U.S. peace envoy to Afghanistan is in Beijing for a previously scheduled meeting, an American Embassy spokesman said Thursday, as indications grew of new momentum in efforts to end Afghanistan's 18-year war and a push by China to boost its influence in the region.

The spokesman gave no further details about the visit by Zalmay Khalilzad, but it comes just days after he said that for the first time he can report "substantive" progress on all four issues key to a peace agreement. The spokesman spoke on routine condition of anonymity.

Khalilzad has said the latest round of talks with the Taliban had been the "most productive" yet and had broadened to include a timeline for both intra-Afghan negotiations and a cease-fire.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

said last month that Washington is hopeful a peace agreement to bring an end to the war can be reached before Sept. 1.

Reports in Afghanistan said a Taliban delegation and former President Hamid Karzai had also recently visited Beijing.

Along with Pakistan, Iran and Russia, China is gaining influence in Afghanistan even as the United States spends billions of dollars to support the Afghan National Security Forces.

China has hosted previous rounds of talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government and has substantial interests in the country's mineral wealth as well as in reducing the chances of the nation's violence and chronic instability flowing across the two countries' narrow border in the remote Wakhan corridor region.

China has also joined in meetings with the U.S. and Russia over the Afghan peace process. A joint statement issued by the three following talks in Moscow in April said they encouraged the Taliban to "participate in peace talks with a broad, representative Afghan delegation that includes the government as soon as possible." The statement also said the sides took

The statement also said the sides took note of the Taliban's commitment to cut ties with "international terrorist groups," including those fighting to overthrow Beijing's rule in the far northwestern Chinese territory of Xiniiang.

The Taliban should also ensure areas they control are not used to threaten any other country and should prevent terrorist recruiting, training, and fundraising, and "expel any known terrorists," the statement said.

China has secured rights to Afghanistan's Mes Aynak copper deposit, believed to contain about 450 million tons of the metal worth tens of billions of dollars. However, poor security and economic chaos in the country have prevented evelopment of the mine, which also sits on an ancient

Buddhist pilgrimage site

Afghanistan's former ambassador to China, Janan Mosazai, said last year that Beijing is helping Afghanistan set up a mountain brigade to bolster counterterrorism operations, but that no Chinese troops would be stationed in the country. Along with that military assistance, China has also provided equipment and training to Afghanistan's government.

Despite the denials of Chinese military activity in the area, unconfirmed reports have shown what appear to be Chinese military vehicles operating in the Wakhan corridor, which lies in the shadow of the Hindu Kush mountains with Tajikistan to the north and Pakistan to the south.

Afghanistan is also an observer member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a Beijing-led bloc, which experts see as seeking to counter American influence in

Institute to advocate for diplomacy over war

By WYATT OLSON Stars and Stripes

Two of the most vilified figures from the political left and right are contributing about \$1 million to a common cause: attempting to shift American foreign policy away from the use of military force and toward more vigorous dislocations.

diplomacy.

George Soros' Open Society
Foundations and the Charles
Koch Institute are each contributing about a half-million dollars
to launch the Quincy Institute for
Responsible Statecraft in November in Washington.

It will kick off with 10 to 12 fulltime staffers and another dozen adjunct scholars and analysts. The institute will produce scholarly analysis that initially focuses on the Middle East and East Asia.



promoted to a wider audience through publishing opinion essays, holding conferences

Its perspec-

tive will be

conferences and reaching out to the public, members of Congress and their staffs.

Congress and their statis.

The institute is named for John
Quincy Adams, America's sixth
president, who declared that the
young nation "goes not abroad in
search of monsters to destroy."

During a recent phone interview with Stars and Stripes, Andrew Bacevich, a historian and retired U.S. Army colonel who is one of the Quincy Institute's cofounders, talked about the niche it will fill in the crowded constellation of American foreign policy think tanks.

Stars and Stripes: What was the genesis for creating the Quincy Institute?

Bacevich: We believe that there is a foreign policy consensus which mainstream Republicans and mainstream Democrats adhere, and that consensus pays too much attention to the use of military force and not enough attention to diplomatic engagement.

We surveyed the trajectory of U.S. foreign policy, particularly since the end of the Cold War—so since 1989, 1990—and the preeminent feature is war. And sadly, for the most part, despite all the exertions and sacrifices of U.S. troops, the payoff from those wars has been negligible.

The aim of the Quincy Institute is to introduce into the foreign policy debate themes that emphasize realism, restraint and prudence, so that perhaps over time we could move our foreign policy away from this penchant for war to something more productive.

Q: How did this "penchant for war" evolve? Democrats historically have been regarded as less hawkish than Republicans. Did the trauma of the Sept. 11 attacks lead to a generally more hawkish Democratic Party?

A: I think the change dates



IARKUS BOWLING/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Soldiers conduct night-fire missions in Afghanistan in December. A new institute is being formed to attempt to shift U.S. foreign policy toward more diplomacy and less use of military force.

from the fall of the Berlin Wall. If you recall, the first post-Cold War president was Bill Clinton, a Democrat. And if you'll recall the Clinton era, he was remarkably willing to use force — in Haiti, in Bosnia, in Kossov, in Somalia, bombing attacks on Sudan, on Iraq, on Afghanistan.

If you fast-forward to the next Democratic president, Barack Obama, he certainly suggested that he wanted to wean us away from this tendency to use force, but the truth is he didn't. He pulled us out of Iraq only losend us back into Iraq. He never delivered on ending the war in Afrhanistan.

And if you look at his record of using drones to assassinate people, airstrikes in Libya — there, too, we have a very hawkish Demoratic president. I'm not trying to suggest they are more hawkish than the Republicians. What I am suggesting is that both parties bought into this militaristic, interventionist tendency that was very prominent after the Cold War.

From the Quincy Institute's perspective, we want to focus critical attention not on one party or the other. We are not Republican or Democratic. We are not progressive. We're not conservative.

Q: How do you think the American public perceives the effectiveness of military force as a means of foreign policy?

A: I think the public is ill-informed and confused. Again, I would hope that our institute could correct that.

Q: What's the significance of two of your primary founding contributors coming from opposite ends of the political spectrum?

A: That is a symbol, an expression, of our intention to be trans-partisan.

We've gotten financial support from a variety of entities — none of them foreign, none of them corporate — but different foundations. It's true that the two biggest grants we've gotten are from the Charles Koch Institut — emphatically conservative — and from George Soros's Open Society Foundations, which is emphatically progressive.

I think I am correct in saying

those two entities have never jointly funded any kind of a project.

Q: What would U.S. foreign policy look like as advocated by the Quincy Institute?

A: Fewer wars. More creative efforts to bring about solutions to conflict without resort to war. What's an example of that? Well, take the involvement in the United States in the competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran, where we have sided with Saudi Arabia, a country which is not democratic, which does not respect human rights

We have emphatically sided with Saudi Arabia, selling them

hundreds of billions of dollars in arms.

We think that's a mistake. We think we should side neither with Saudi Arabia nor Iran. We don't have much at stake in that fight, but we do have an interest in trying to prevent that competition from leading to a larger conflict. So that's where creative diplomacy ought to play a role.

Q: What would you say to critics who call your approach isolationist?

A: I've tried to use the word engagement about four times. (Laughs.) We're not against trade. We're not against treaties.

Q: When is America justified in

the use of military force?
A: Any attack on the United

A: Any attack on the United States of America. Any attack on U.S. forces. The hard part is when there is a threat to U.S. vital interests. I say it's the hard part because that's where you end up having an interesting discussion. What are the vital interests of the USA? They are not constant. They change as circumstances change. I don't think we should assume that what were the vital interests of the United States 30 years ago are the same today.

I think the Persian Gulf is actually a very good example of that. I personally — I'm not sure if my Quincy Institute colleagues would agree — don't think that the Persian Gulf rates as a vital interest of the USA. We don't need it.

The American way of life is not dependent upon Persian Gulf oil. Maybe China's way of life depends on Persian Gulf oil, but our way of life. There ought to be a robust discussion of the hierarchy of our interests. That ends up determining what you're willing to fight for and what you're not willing to fight for.

We think that our policies have been imprudent and because of that we've wasted money and we've wasted lives in conflicts that frankly haven't been worth it

Here we are, 18 years at war in Afghanistan, with no particular expectation that it's going to end any time soon. That's a travesty.

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U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Special quarmy

MILITARY

Misconduct claim clouds joint chiefs nomination

BY PAUL SONNE, KAROUN DEMIRJIAN AND MISSY RYAN The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The confirmation of the nominee to become the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff could be delayed as senators question how the Pentagon handled sexual assault allegations against him even though military authorities deemed them insufficient to bring charges.

President Donald Trump in early April nominated Air Force Gen. John Hyten, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, to become the next vice chairman.

Shortly thereafter, an Army colonel who had been relieved of her duties while serving on his staff for allegedly creating a toxic work environment alleged that Hyten had had sexually a abusive contact with her on more than a half-dozen occasions, including in a California hotel room during the Reagan National Defense Forum in December 2017.

The allegations — which Hyten denies — prompted a probe by the Air Force criminal investigative service. Based on the results the Air Force decided not to press forward with a court-martial or any other disciplinary actions against Hyten, who is in charge of the nation's nuclear arsenal.

"After a comprehensive investigation by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, there was insufficient evidence to support any finding of misconduct on the part of Gen. Hyten," Pentagon spokeswoman Col. Deb Halfhill said in a statement. "With more than 38 years of service to our nation, Gen. Hyten has proven himself to be a principled and dedicated patriot."

Air Force officials briefed senators Wednesday morning about the results of the investigation.

A senior U.S. military official said investigators spoke to 53 people in three countries and 13 states, reviewed thousands of emails and ended up "out of rocks to turn over" after following all the leads provided. After interviewing people who previously served under Hyten, investigators didn't find indications of such behavior with other subordinates, said the military official, who like others spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the details of a legal matter.

of a legal matter.

"Did we find a case where the servicemember says on this date, x happened, and when we looked at it, they were on different continents? We didn't," the official said. "So was it physically possible? Yes."

The Army colonel who made the allegations said she is willing to testify under oath to the Senate Armed Services Committee, which is overseeing Hyten's confirmation process, preferably in a closed-door session.

Speaking to The Washington Post, she described the military justice system that adjudicated her case as flawed and said the alleged incidents merit action by the military as Hyten prepares to ascend to a position of even greater power.

The Army colonel, who said she was in the force for 28 years, including two tours in Afghanistan and two tours in Iraq, and had served a variety of prestigious assignments involving high-level strategy, said she didn't tell anyone about the incidents at the time.

A spokesman for Hyten at Strategic Command declined to make the general available for comment. In a statement, the spokesman said Strategic Command fully cooperated with the investigation.

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee have already questioned the Pentagon about its handling of the case. In a June 25 letter to acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper; Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass; and Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., said they had "serious concerns and questions" about the procedures the Department of Defense followed during the investigation.

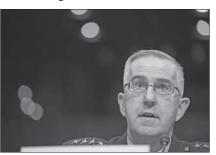
The senators said they were "gravely troubled" that the Pentagon designated an Air Force general who was junior in grade to Hyten to decide whether to proceed to a court-martial or other disciplinary measures. Gen. James Holmes, commander of Air Combat Command, who is part of a small Air Force four-star general officer corps along with Hyten, served as the convening authority in the case.

Warren and Duckworth also expressed concern that Hyten wasn't removed or suspended from his post at U.S. Strategic Command during a criminal investigation against him and retained his security clearance during the process.

"That he remains in command while under criminal investigation raises serious questions about whether the Department is affording General Hyten preferential treatment because of his rank and pending nomination," the senators wrote

The senior U.S. military official said the department decided to make Holmes the convening authority for the case to leave room for the possibility of appeal to the defense secretary or the secretary of the Air Force. The official said Holmes had "zero conflict interest" because he didn't work for Hyten, wasn't from the same community of nuclear and space officers and wouldn't work for him in the future.

An Air Force official said no evidence was produced that was sufficient to warrant the revocation of Hyten's security clearance or temporary removal from his



CARLOS BONGIOANNI/Stars and Stripes

Commander of U.S. Strategic Command Gen. John Hyten testifies during a February Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. Hyten's confirmation to become the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff might be delayed as senators question how the Pentagon handled sexual assault allegations against him.

osition.

The Army colonel said she contacted senators to raise concerns that the matter wasn't going to be handled fairly because one of Hyten's fellow four-star Air Force generals was adjudicating the case.

The situation risks imperiling the confirmation of one of the nation's top military officials at a time of unprecedented leadership upheaval at the Pentagon. The Department of Defense is set to be led by its third acting defense secretary this year as Esper prepares to comply with federal rules by stepping aside temporarily while his nomination is considered.

There is also uncertainty in the uniformed ranks. The four-standmiral who was due to take over as the Navy's top officer on Aug. I instead abruptly announced his retirement last weekend, citing his interactions with a subordinate accused of acting inappropriately toward female officers. Gen. Paul Selva, the current vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is due to retire on July 31

Whether the situation will prevent Hyten from assuming the military's No. 2 post may turn on whether senators believe the word of an Army colonel over that of a four-star Air Force general — and whether the White House, the Pentagon and Hyten himself decide to proceed with the process.

The Army colonel, who spoke on the condition that The Washington Post not use her name but agreed to be described by her service and rank, characterized a series of incidents in which she alleged Hyten touched, hugged or kissed her without her consent.

and spoke of his feelings for her. In many of the alleged incidents, she said she rebuffed him or warned him that his actions were inappropriate.

The colonel said the first incident occurred during a visit to Palo Alto, Calif., in January 2017. She had stayed behind in Hyten's hotel room after a team meeting, she said, and the general pressed her hand to his groin as she tried to leave. She said she did not report that incident, wondering if it had been a mistake.

Other alleged incidents followed, she said, culminating in one during another trip to California, this time for the Reagan National Defense Forum outside Los Angeles in December 2017. The colonel said Hyten appeared at the door of her hotel room in its workout clothes. Once inside, she said that he began kissing her aggressively and grinding against her body.

"I felt really violated and really disappointed," she said.

She said she didn't tell anyone about what had happened until much later because she thought she could manage the situation and she believed that because Hyten planned to retire after his Strategic Command assignment there would be no further chance of other subordinates facing similar conduct.

During all that time, the colonel said, Hyten praised her and advocated for her career, recommending her to other senior officers as she sought a position outside of Strategic Command. That changed early in 2018, she said, when Hyten's command opened a formal investigation into allegations that she had helped create a hostile environment.

A different officer who was on Hyten's team said the Army colonel was short-tempered, responded angrily to not getting her way and yelled at other officials even though she sometimes was a well-versed leader able to connect the dots between Strategic Command and Washington.

The Army colonel denied yelling and said she was under stress because of the alleged inappropriate behavior by Hyten.

"In hindsight, I could have been much more levelheaded," she said. "I could have. But to sit here and say I was a toxic leader is not true."

In March 2018, Hyten signed off on a decision to relieve her of her duties. Later that year, she assumed a senior role at a different command and is expecting to retire as a colonel

The other officer formerly on Hyten's team, who lacked authorization to speak publicly, suggested that the Army colonel aloos raised allegations of a nonsexual nature against Hyten that weren't substantiated. The colonel confirmed that as part of her appeal against the inquiry that lead to her dismissal, she had pointed out what she described as Hyten's questionable travel and ethics issues.

She said she provided statements to an inspector general investigation regarding those matters but didn't know the outcome. The Post was not able to verify what resulted from those allegations. The colonel denied that she had leveled any allegations as retribution for being relieved of her duties.

"I was ready to go to my grave with this because I didn't want to have to deal with it," she said.

That changed when Hyten emerged as the president's choice to replace Selva, she noted. "I saw that nomination come out and I freaked out," she said.

"I was like, 'I won't be able to live with myself if I don't and this happens to somebody else,' " she added. "So that was a no-brainer for me."

Hyten hasn't spoken publicly about the matter. Pentagon officials didn't immediately respond to a request for comment on the specifics of the allegations.

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee are now combing through the details of the case.

Sen. Jack Reed, of Rhode Island, the ranking Democrat on the panel, declined to say whether he intended to insist on hearing from the Army colonel.

"We are taking this step by step," Reed said as he exited a meeting in which senators were told of the findings of the investigation.

Sen. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., a veteran of the Air Force who was sexually assaulted while serving, noted she had "a lot more questions" and was working through the materials officials had provided to the panel.

"I'm doing my due diligence, like we should with everybody,"

Whether the situation will prevent Hyten from assuming the military's No. 2 post may turn on whether senators believe the word of an Army colonel over that of a four-star Air Force general — and whether the White House, the Pentagon and Hyten himself decide to proceed with the process.

Acosta defends his Epstein deal amid resignation calls

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Trying to tamp down calls for his resignation, Labor Secretary Alex Acosta on Wednesday defended his handling of a sex trafficking case involving now-jailed financier Jeffrey Epstein, insisting he got the toughest deal he could at the time.

In a nearly hourlong news conference, Acosta retraced the steps that federal prosecutors took in the case when he was U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Florida a decade ago, insisting that "in our heart, we were trying to do the right thing for these victims." He said prosecutors were working to avoid a more lenient arrangement that would have allowed Epstein to "walk free."

"We believe that we proceeded appropriately," he said, a contention challenged by critics who say Epstein's penalty was egregiously light.

The episode reignited this week

when federal prosecutors in New York brought a new round of child sex trafficking charges against the wealthy hedge fund manager.

On Wednesday, a new accuser stepped forward to say Epstein raped her in his New York mansion when she was 15. Jennifer Araoz, now 32, told "Today" she never went to the police because she feared retribution from the well-connected Epstein. She has now filed court papers seeking information from Epstein in preparation for suing him

While the handling of the case arose during Acosta's confirmation hearings, it has come under fresh and intense scrutiny after the prosecutors in New York brought their charges Monday, alleging Epstein abused dozens of underage girls in the early 2000s, paying them hundreds of dollars in cash for massages, then molesting them at his homes in Florida and New York. Epstein has pleaded not guilty to the charges; if convicted he could be imprisoned for the rest of his life.

Acosta's lawyerly presentation was an effort to push back against growing criticism of his work in a secret 2008 plea deal that let Epstein avoid federal prosecution on charges that he molested teenage girls. A West Palm Beach judge found this year that the deal had violated the Crime Victims' Rights Act because the victims were not informed or consulted.

Acosta insisted his office did the best it could under the circumstances a decade ago. He said state authorities had planned to go after Epstein with charges that would have resulted in no jail time until his office intervened and pressed for tougher consequences, a contention that is supported by the record. The alternative, he said, would have been for federal prosecutors to "roll the dice" and hope to win a conviction

But Epstein was given only 13



ALEX BRANDON/

Labor Secretary Alex Acosta appears at a news conference in Washington on Wednesday to discuss his handling of the sex trafficking case involving financier Jeffrey Epstein.

months in a work release program, which let him work out of the jail six days a week. Acosta said it was "entirely appropriate" to be outraged about that leniency, but he blamed Florida authorities.

His account did not sit well with Barry Krischer, who was the Palm Beach County attorney during the case. Krischer, a Democrat, said Acosta "should not be allowed to rewrite history."

Acosta's South Florida office had gotten to the point of drafting an indictment that could have sent Epstein to federal prison for life. But it was never filed, leading to Epstein's guilty plea to two state prostitution-related charges.

Krischer said the federal indictment was "abandoned after secret negotiations between Mr. Epstein's lawyers and Mr. Acosta."

"If Mr. Acosta was truly concerned with the State's case and felt he had to rescue the matter, he would have moved forward with the 53-page indictment that his own office drafted," Krischer

Dems preparing to question Mueller say it 'will not be easy'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Some are watching old video of his previous testimony. Others are closely re-reading his 448-page report. And almost all are worrying about how they'll make the most of the short time they'll have for questioning.

Robert Mueller, the Democrats know, will be tough to crack.

The former FBI director has said he won't answer questions beyond what is in the report on Russia's election meddling and the Trump campaign and possible obstruction of justice when he comes to Congress on July 17.

Mueller is expected to testify in front of the Judiciary and intelligence committees for two hours each, with time split evenly between Republicans and Democrats, though that timing is still a subject of negotiations. That means Democrats will have to be efficient and targeted in their attempts to extract information from the former special counsel and spottight what they say are his most damaging findings against President Donald Trums.

"It will not be easy," said Rhode Island Rep. David Cicilline, a Democratic member of the Judiciary Committee. "We just have to be very smart about how we use the time and really give the special counsel the time to tell the story."

Cicilline said he's reading the report a second time, thoroughly, with an eye toward what he wants to ask.

Separately, a Democratic aide said staff members have been watching old videos of Mueller testifying as FBI director during the administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. They're looking to see how he'll act, the aide said, and they have noticed he gives minimal commentary when answering questions. The aide was not authorized to discuss internal preparations for the hearing and

requested anonymity.
Wary of their challenging wit-

ness, Democratic members of the Judiciary Committee huddled Wednesday evening to discuss strategy for questioning Mueller, along with other topics. Exactly how the hearing will be structured is still being negotiated, members said as they emerged, but Democrats are expected to divvy up the questions in a methodical way.

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Associated Press

Trump lashes out on Twitter

ahead of 'social media summit'

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump lashed out at social media companies and the press ahead of a "Social Media Summit" he's hosting at the White House that will bring together mostly conservative groups.

Trump's Twitter messages Thursday morning included jabs at "certain companies," the press and his Democratic rivals, whom he demeaned with schoolyard taunts.

Trump predicted, without reason, the demise of the press and social media platforms if he loses to a Democrat in 2020 and hailed himself as "so great looking and mart, a true Stable Genius!"

The outburst came as Trump

prepared for a conference that offers him a chance to play to his conservative base in the lead-up to the 2020 election.

Trump has long complained, without evidence, that companies such as Google, Twitter and Facebook are "against me" and has threatened lawsuits to halt what he's claimed is their bias against conservatives.

Google, Facebook and Twitter weren't invited to the event, their representatives have confirmed.

Trump said in his tweets that a "big subject" of the summit would be "the tremendous dishonesty, bias, discrimination and suppression practiced by certain companies."

"We will not let them get away with it much longer," he said. Enjoy generous chiropractic, acupuncture, and massage therapy benefits

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Tropical storm threatens flooded Louisiana

By Kevin McGill and Rebecca Santana Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Tropical Storm Barry formed off the coast of Louisiana on Thursday and threatened to blow ashore as a hurricane with relatively weak winds but torrential rains that could test the flood control improvements made in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina 14 years

Forecasters said the first hurricane of the Atlantic season could hit the state's swampy southern tip Friday night or early Saturday, with potentially ruinous downpours that could go on for hours as the storm pushes inland.

Plaquemines Parish, at Louisiana's southeastern tip, ordered the mandatory evacuation of as many as 10,000 people, and communities began handing out sandbags.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards declared an emergency and said National Guard troops and high-water vehicles will be positioned all over the state.

"The entire coast of Louisiana is at play in this storm," he warned.

On Wednesday, with the gathering storm still out over the Gulf of Mexico, it dumped as much as 8 inches on metro New Orleans in just three hours. The deluge triggered flash flooding and raised fears about the even heavier rains on the way.

The National Hurricane Center said as much as 20 inches of rain could fall in parts of eastern Louisiana, including Baton Rouge, and the entire region could get as much as 10 inches. New Orleans could receive 10 inches, forecasters aid.

The storm's surge also could prevent water from emptying out of the already swollen Mississippi River, possibly sending water



MAX BECHERER, THE (BATON ROUGE, LA.) ADVOCATE/AP

Motorists try to maneuver around flooding at an intersection following heavy rain in New Orleans on Wednesday.

over levees near New Orleans, forecasters said. The river has been running high for months.

The National Hurricane Center said Barry could have maximum sustained winds of about 75 mph, just over the 74 mph threshold for a hurricane, when it comes ashore, making it a Category 1

In New Orleans, where Katrina in 2005 caused catastrophic flooding that was blamed for more than 1,500 deaths in Louisiana and other states, officials asked people to keep at least three days' worth of supplies on hand and to keep their neighborhood storm drains clear so water can move ouickly

After Katrina, the Army Corps of Engineers began a multibillion-dollar hurricane protection system that isn't yet complete. The work included repairs and improvements to some 350 miles of levees and more than 70 pump stations that are used to remove floodwaters.

A spokesman for the Corps in New Orleans said the agency is not expecting widespread overtopping of the levees, but there are concerns for areas south of the city, like Plaquemines Parish.

The parish made sandbags available to people in areas not under evacuations orders, as did several other communities in Louisiana and Mississippi.

The National Weather Service said it expects the river to rise to 19 feet by Saturday morning at a key gauge in the New Orleans area, which is protected by levees 20 to 25 feet high.

"We're confident the levees themselves are in good shape. The big focus is height," Corps v spokesman Ricky Boyett said.

New Orleans got an early taste Wednesday of what may be in store. Floodwaters invaded downtown hotels and businesses and turned streets into rivers, paralyzing rush-hour traffic and stalling cars.

Some people paddled their way around in kayaks. It all happened fast.

"I must have got to work about a quarter to 7," said Donald Smith, who saw his restaurant on Basin Street flood for the third time this year. "By 7:15, water was everywhere."

The city's Sewerage and Water Board said the pumping system that drains the streets was at full capacity.

But the immense amount of rain in three hours would overwhelm any system, said agency director Ghassan Korban.

As the water from Wednesday morning's storms receded, people worried about what might

people worried about what might come next.

Tanya Gulliver-Garcia was trying to make her way home during the deluge. Flooded streets turned

a 15-minute drive into an ordeal lasting more than two hours.

"This is going to be a slow

"This is going to be a slow storm," she said. "That's what I'm concerned about." Tourists Floyd and Missy Mar-

Tourists Floyd and Missy Martin of Raleigh, N.C., were trying to make the best of it at a store with puddles on the floor where they were buying an umbrella, chips and peanuts, and two bottles of red wine.

"We could drown out our sorrows or make an adventure of it," Floyd Martin joked.

High water levels push canal into homes near swollen Detroit River

By Corey WILLIAMS Associated Press

DETROIT — Michelle Davis pulls on kneeh-ligh rubber wad-ing boots each time she leaves and returns to her flooded home on Detroit's east side, the result of an overflowing canal that abuts several homes and feeds into the swollen Detroit River nearby.

Despite the sun-splashed and rainless day, one thing was clear Tuesday as Davis slowly made her way through the flooded street in front of her home: Water was winning. For weeks, it's gushed over and through cracks and gaps in canal seawalls, poured through backyards and spilled down driveways into streets now overtaken with water.

This is not the Heartland, where dealing with spring flooding and its aftermath is common. This is Detroit, where by summer local children are more accustomed to playing on dry street pavement than wading through water that stands ankle-to knee-deep.

But water levels throughout the Great Lakes basin due to winter snow melt and heavy spring rain have dampened the spirit of some residents who worry that their property and belongings will be ruined by the encroaching water.

On Tuesday, torrents of canal water gushed into already overwhelmed storm water drains. Sandbags stacked days ago to divert water from foundations and out of basements are submerged.

"The city says there's nothing they can do. The drainage is at capacity," said Davis, 57, who has battled water in the basement of her rented house off and on since June 29

"Most people can't afford flood insurance," she added. "If they make a claim, their insurance will go up."

Detroit is not the only big city in the basin concerned about flooding. In late April, crews in a suburb of Rochester, N.Y., started filling sandbags in case of flooding due to high water levels on Lake Ontario.

Three months of abnormally wet weather this past spring have kept stream flows into the Great Lakes well above average, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

National Weather Service records show rainfall over areas that feed into Lakes Michigan, Huron and St. Clair was up to 4 inches above normal in April.

Water levels in Lakes Erie and



COREY WILLIAMS/AP

John Wrinkle points to high water in Fox Creek behind a home he owns on Detroit's east side on Monday.

Ontario are the highest recorded. Lake St. Clair, which feeds into the Detroit River, also set a new high-water mark. Lake St. Clair's water level was forecast to increase by 4 inches over last month's level. The lake's outflow through the Detroit River is forecast to be above average this



PHOTOS BY ERIC GAY/AP

Decorations cover the walls of the rooms of immigrants at the U.S. government's newest holding center for migrant children in Carrizo Springs, Texas, on Tuesday.

New holding center for migrant children opens in former camp

By Nomaan Merchant Associated Press

CARRIZO SPRINGS, Texas—A former oilfield worker camp off a dirt road in rural Texas has become the U.S. government's newest holding center for detaining migrant children after they leave Border Patrol stations, where complaints of overcrowding and filthy conditions have sparked a worldwide outcry.

Inside the wire fence that encircles the site are soccer fields, a giant air-conditioned tent that serves as a dining hall and trailers set up for use as classrooms and as places where children can call their families.

The long trailers once used to house workers in two-bedroom suites have been converted into 12-person dorms, with two pairs of bunk beds in each bedroom and the living room.

The Department of Health and Human Services said about 225 children are being held at the site in Carrizo Springs, with plans to expand to as many as 1,300, making it one of the biggest camps in the U.S. government system.

The government said the holding center will give it muchneeded capacity to take in more children from the Border Patrol and prevent their detention in stations like the one in Clint, Texas, where lawyers last month reported some 250 youngsters were being held in cells with inadequate food, water and sanitation. Of the children held at Carrizo Springs, 21 had previously been detained at Clint, HHS spokesman Mark Weber said.

HHS said the Carrizo Springs location is a comfortable environment for children while they wait to be placed with family members or sponsors in the U.S.



Migrants say the Pledge of Allegiance in a writing class at the holding center.

But immigrant advocates and others liken such places to child prison camps and worry that the isolated location 110 miles from San Antonio will make it harder to find lawyers to help the teenagers with their immigration cases.

Advocates have complained that HHS' largest holding centers have traumatized children through overcrowding and inadequate staffing.

"All of this is part of a morally bankrupt system," said Rep. Joaquin Castro, a San Antonio

There's also the huge cost: an average of \$775 per day for each child. HHS plans to pay the non-profit Baptist Child and Family Services up to \$300 million through January to run the Carrizo Springs site.

The government allowed The Associated Press to visit on Tuesday and distribute photos and video, though the AP could not show children's faces because of privacy restrictions.

Boys and girls are kept in separate buildings and follow separate schedules. They have decorated their rooms with drawings of superheroes and the flags of their

home countries. Many children smiled and greeted visitors as they walked by. Several girls knitted yarn hats and armbands.

A series of tents serve as the infirmary, with nurses on hand treating a few children for lice and flu-like symptoms.

Breakfast is at 7 a.m., followed by soccer, then six hours of classes in reading, writing, social studies, science and math.

In reading class on Tuesday, the students were asked to practice reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in English. Many did so haltingly before the teachers called one student to the front to help lead them. After he finished, the whole class applauded.

HHS said the goal is to move the children through the holding center as quickly as possible. The department said it has sped up placing children with sponsors to an average of 45 days, down from 93 days last November. One key, HHS said, was lifting a requirement that all adult relatives be fingerprinted before they can take a child out of custody.

"This facility is all about unification," said Weber, the HHS

Wide immigration enforcement action said near

By Colleen Long AND SOPHIA TAREEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A nation-wide immigration enforcement operation targeting people who are in the United States Illegally is expected to begin this weekend after it was postponed last month by President Donald Trump, according to two administration officials and immigrant activists.

The operation, which is sparking outrage and concern among immigrant advocates, would target people with final orders of removal, including families whose immigration cases had been fasttracked by judges in 10 major cities.

The sweep remains in flux and possibly could begin later, according to the officials, who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. Activists are circulating information about hotimes for immigrants to call and bolstering know-your-rights training.

The operation is similar to ones conducted regularly since 2003 that often produce hundreds of arrests. It is something unusual to target families, as opposed to immigrants with criminal histories, but not unprecedented. The Obama and Trump administrations have targeted families in previous operations.

But this one is notable really because of the politics swirling around it.

Trump announced on Twitter last month that the sweep would mark the beginning of an effort to

deport millions of people who are in the country illegally, a nearimpossibility given the limited resources of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which makes the arrests and carries out

deportation orders.
Then he abruptly canceled it after a phone call with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif, while lawmakers worked to pass a \$4.6 billion border aid package. Plus, details had leaked and authorities worried about the safety of ICE officers.

They still are. The agency said in a statement that it would not offer specifics on enforcement

operations.

"As always, ICE prioritizes the arrest and removal of unlawfully present aliens who pose a threat to national security, public safety and border security," according to the statement.

The administration has been straining to manage a border crisis, and some officials believe flashy shows of force in deporting families would deter others migrants from coming.

But others have criticized drawing resources away from the border at a time when the Border Patrol is detaining four times the number of people it should. Also, a watchdog report found filthy, potentially dangerous conditions at some stations.

Activists have been preparing for more raids; some said they were gearing up for them to start Sunday. Activists in Chicago planned a Saturday rally with roughly 10,000 people expected to attend.

Trump set to announce new plan for census query

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is expected to announce new executive action Thursday during a news conference on the 2020 census and his push to include a citizenship question.

Trump tweeted Thursday morning that he planned "a News Conference on the Census and Citizenship" after a White House Social Media Summit.

A senior administrator official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to preview the plans, said the president would be announcing new action, but the official did not elaborate.

Trump said last week that he was "very seriously" considering executive action to try to force the question's inclusion, and that

it was among four or five options

"It's one of the ways that we're thinking about doing it, very seriously," he said, despite the fact that the government has already begun the process of printing the census questionnaire without the question.

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, said in an interview on Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends" Thursday morning that he's expecting Trump to announce an executive order, and said he thinks "it's a good move."

An executive order would not, by itself, override court rulings blocking the question. But such a move could give administration lawyers a new basis to try to convince federal courts the question could be included.

Bills would update VA housing grants for disabled vets

Stars and Stripes

When retired Army Capt. Ryan Kules purchased his first home about 10 years ago, he and his wife used a grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs to modify their 1970s-era house to accommodate his needs as a double ampute.

Three kids later, Kules was looking to move into a house that better suited the needs of his growing family, but this time the expense of modifying his house was on him and his wife.

New legislation introduced last week in the House and Senate aims to remedy that gap and make the VA's Specially Adapted Housing grant available to qualified veterans every 10 years instead of as a one-time opportunity. The legislation also increases the value of the grant to about \$50,000 and allows veterans to receive funds up to six times. The maximum the grant provides to veterans now is about \$85,000.

"Peace of mind is definitely what that is," Kules, 38, said of the proposed upgrade for disabled veterans. "Wherever we chose to live, just like anybody else would want that flexibility and peace of mind, we'll have that opportunity."

The grant program began in 1948 and has been updated during the years for inflation and cost of living adjustments. It is open to veterans with certain permanent,

service-connected disabilities, with the most common being bilateral amputees.

Modifications made to homes include widening doorways and hallways, adding walk-in showers with bench seats, lowering countertops and adding wheelchair ramps outside the house.

ramps ousside the noise.

While Kules, who works in
Washington, D.C., as the director
of the Wounded Warrior Project
Combat Stress Recovery program, was grateful for the grant,
he saw two shortfalls in it.

First, the maximum \$64,000 hat was available at the time that he received the grant did not come close to covering the \$100,000 that it cost to complete projects such as widening doorways and hallways and modifying the kitchen and bathroom in his home. Second, it helped at only one moment in time and does not support the lifelong needs of the veteran.

Last year, Kules testified before Congress about the VA program, and his efforts helped pave the way for the new legislation.

In the House, the upgraded loan program is named in his honor, the Ryan Kules Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019. Introduced by Reps. Gus Bilirakis, R. Fla., Phil Roe, R. Tenn., and Mike Levin, D-Calif., the bill is expected to pass with two GI Bill upgrades affixed to it, said Derek Fronabarger, legislative director for the Wounded



Courtesy of Ryan Kule

Retired Army Capt. Ryan Kules sits with his wife, Nancy; and their children, from left, Evan, Liv and Jillian. Kules, who was injured by a roadside bornb in 2005, helped push for new legislation to get more government funding for disabled veterans to modify their homes.

Warrior Project.

The cost of the program upgrades will be paid for by VA home loan funding fees, as will the GI Bill upgrades.

The bill was introduced in the Senate as the Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019 by Sens. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., who are members of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. It is named after retired Army Col. Paul Benne, a native of Spring Hill, Kan., who developed a medical condition that led to his retirement in 2013. Benne struggled for more than a year with the VA to receive an adapted housing

grant.
"This modernized and expanded grant program will allow veterans to utilize vital grants in a way that best fit their needs

 providing greater support and improving the quality of life for many of our nation's veterans," Moran said in a statement about the bill's announcement.

"Many veterans carry wounds from their service that make everyday life more challenging." Sinema said. "That is why our bit is so important. It breaks down barriers and helps veterans access the specially adaptive housing benefits they've earned." Fronabarger was less optimis-

tic about the fate of the Senate version of the bill because of time constraints as congressional lawmakers turn their attention toward passing the federal budget.

In the past decade, grant approval numbers have nearly doubled, according to VA data. In fiscal year 2017, 1,926 grants were approved.

Aside from modifying newly purchased homes, accessing the grant multiple times would also allow veterans to make changes in an existing home as their needs evolve or previous modifications need repair.

Kules, for example, anticipates he will one day rely less on his prosthetic leg and more on a wheelchair. Injured by a roadside bomb in 2005, Kules was only 24 years old when he lost his right arm above the elbow and his left leg above the knee.

"That's an age where there's lots of life left ahead," he said.

Should the legislation pass, Kules said he looks forward to accessing the grant in the future to update a home after his children are grown.

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Judge: Lawmaker's campaign-funded trip to Italy was family vacation

By Morgan Cook The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — A federal judge in the criminal case against Rep. Duncan Hunter ruled in an order filed this week that a campaign-funded trip Hunter's family took to Italy was not legally protected legislative activity, and neither were efforts to control political damage from a probe into his campaign spending.

Judge Thomas J. Whelan listed the findings Tuesday in the
three-page order memorializing
his Monday ruling to deny some
of the lawmaker's key motions to
dismiss part or all of a 60-count
indictment against him for allegedly using more than \$250,000
in campaign money for personal
purposes including getaways
with girlfriends, dental work, private school tuition, video games
and more.

Hunter, R-Calif., and his wife and former campaign manager, Margaret, were indicted Aug. 21, 2018. Both originally pleaded not guilty to the charges.



Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., center, leaves federal court July 1 in San Diego. A federal judge ruled that a campaign-funded Hunter family trip to Italy was not legally protected legislative activity.

Last month, Margaret Hunter agreed to plead guilty to one count of conspiracy that named Duncan Hunter as her co-conspirator. In motions filed late last month.

Hunter, a Marine veteran, argued that the charges should be dismissed because some of the government's evidence was legislative material and activity pronected by the U.S. Constitution. He specifically named evidence related to campaign spending for a trip to Italy in 2015 and efforts that members of Hunter's staff made in 2016 to plan a public rebuttal for release when the Office of Congressional Ethics disclosed the results of its probe into Hunter's political spending.

Whelan wrote in his order Tuesday that based on the law and a preponderance of evidence, the court had determined the arguments were "wholly without merit."

Included in the order were findings that addressed Hunter's argument that the family trip to Italy was a constitutionally protected legislative activity based on Hunter's failed attempt to arrange a visit to a U.S. Navy base near Naples while his family was in the area.

"The proposed November 2015 visit to a base in or around Naples, Italy, in conjunction with the Hunter family vacation was, at best, a pre-legislative or factifinding investigation by an individual member of Congress," Whelan wrote in his order. "On its face, the purpose of the proposed visit is ambiguous, but evidence of the content, purpose, and motives for the proposal demonstrates that it was designed primarily to provide a pretext for the family va-

cation and not for any legislative

purpose."
Whelan's order also included findings that addressed Hunter's argument the constitutional protections applied to evidence related to efforts Hunter's official staff made to prepare a public response for release when the Office of Congressional Ethics disclosed the results of a probe into

Hunter's campaign spending.
"The OCE Report of August
26, 2016, which Hunter played no
role in preparing, is not a legislative act of Hunter's and was not
related to the process of enacting
legislation," Whelan wrote in the
order.

Whelan's order went on to say discussions between Hunter and his staff "was designed to mitgate negative effects of the public release of the report, and was, like a news release, political in nature rather than legislative."

Hunter's trial is scheduled for Sept. 10, according to court records. His office did not respond to a request for comment.

Sweet guitar

Neb. man builds instrument up to its neck in M&M's

By EMILY CASE Norfolk (Neb.) Daily News

NORFOLK, Neb. - What does it take to make a mind-meltingly cool guitar?

Answer: 4,000 M&M's. And a lot of time.

Brian King knows a little bit about it after making his own colorful custom guitar a few months ago. The Norfolk resident calls it one of his "mad scientist projects."

The guitar took about 80 hours in total, he said, especially taking curing time into consideration. He completed it over the course of about three weeks.

The process involved taking apart a new Fender guitar, creating a mold from it, then adding three bags of plain M&M's and epoxy to the mold. After the epoxy mix hardened, he cut out holes and added an epoxy topcoat for extra shine and protection.

Finally, he drilled holes for the guitar neck and reassembled the

"A smooth finish, that's the big challenge," he said. "Make sure it's perfectly flat."

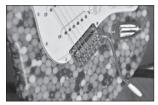
Assembly took place in his garage workshop, which includes all the equipment he needs, as well as some car projects he's done. But it came with its fair share of difficulties.

"That was one thing about this garage," he said. "You could just smell the M&M's. It was so hot and they were melting, and of course ants are running around grabbing pieces so I was cleaning up as I go.

Also helping with the effort were his three children, who assisted by counting M&M's and mixing epoxy.

The sweet creation is fully functional, but you might not want to play it standing up — the guitar is at least eight times heavier than





Above: Brian King poses with the M&M's guitar he built. The guitar, left, took about 80 hours in total to build. according to King. "mad scientist" project.

PHOTOS BY DARIN EPPERLY, THE NORFOLK (NEB.) DAILY NEWS/AP

the original. King said. It was inspired by a similar build with Jawbreakers candies that he saw on the internet.

It's not the first guitar he's built. Among his other guitars are a clear-bodied Flying V and a violet B.C. Rich guitar. In his projects, he goes off his own instructions

"Those are just stuff I randomly bought parts for off the internet and put together, kind of a Fran-kenstein thing," he said.

and instincts.

He found working with a Fender to be slightly easier than other guitars because the body's components provide more wiggle

Even so, you still have to be exact in the measurements. "These guitars, you have to

make sure vou come pretty darn close with all the measurements that it lines up right," he said. "The bridge and the back; the strings have to be in line with ev-

erything too." He likes to keep the guitars for his collection after building them, although he put up the M&M's guitar on Facebook to see if anyone was interested in it.

King first got interested in guitars about 15 years ago. He learned how to play after getting into Metallica, but soon realized he was more into building than playing them.

"I couldn't play it to save my life, but I wanted to build them. I branched off from there," he said. "I'm just kind of a scatterbrain that way.'

Man charged with murder in student's death

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY - A tech worker was charged Wednesday with murder and kidnapping in the death of a Utah college student whose body was found in a wooded area with her arms bound behind her.

Prosecutors said Ayoola A. Ajayi, 31, was the last person Mackenzie Lueck communicated with before she disappeared on June 17.

She died of blunt force trauma to the head, and her body was found with her arms bound with zip ties and ropes, District Attorney Sim Gill said while announcing the charges.

He declined to discuss a motive or the nature of the connection between Lueck and Ajavi. He also didn't say what kind of weapon was used.

Gill became emotional as he described the Lueck family's reaction to the charges.

"They asked me to express on their behalf the generosity of so many strangers and friends," he said. "They are genuinely appreciative and moved by the outpouring of love and compassion."

Lueck disappeared shortly after she returned from a trip to her California hometown for the funeral of her grandmother and took a Lyft from the airport to a park.

She exchanged text messages with Ajayi and met him there, apparently willingly, but her phone was turned off a minute after the last text "and never powered back on," Gill said.

Police later found the charred phone in the backyard of Ajavi's home in Salt Lake City, along with a bone, muscle tissue and part of Lueck's scalp, Gill said.

A neighbor reported a fire and "horrible smell" coming from the yard on the day Lueck disappeared, Gill said.

Her body was later discovered in a shallow grave in Logan Canyon, 85 miles from Salt Lake City. The site is near Utah State University, where Ajayi had attended classes.

Gill said phone data puts him at the canyon a week after Lueck disappeared. Police obtained a search warrant for his home the next day.

Ajayi was arrested June 28 during the wide-ranging search for the 23-year-old University of

Utah student that lasted nearly two weeks. Prosecutors did not strike a deal with Ajayi to find her, said.



Aiavi was charged with

count each of aggravated murder, aggravated kidnapping, obstruction of justice and desecration of a human body. A court appearance was set for Monday.

Ajayi is represented by the public defender's office, which has refused to comment on the case.

The charges make Ajavi eligible for the death penalty, but Gill did not say whether prosecutors would nursue it

Lueck has been remembered as a bubbly, nurturing person. She was a member of a sorority and a part-time senior at the university studying kinesiology and pre-nursing.

Ajayi is an information technology worker who had stints with high-profile companies and was briefly in the Army National Guard.

He has no formal criminal history but was investigated in a 2014 rape allegation and was arrested in a case involving a stolen iPad at Utah State University in 2012.

Good Samaritans in Ga. return cash spilled from armored truck

By Michael Brice-Saddler The Washington Post

The once-in-a-lifetime weather event that took place Tuesday night in a suburb north of Atlanta is perhaps best described by local police: "cloudy with a chance of cash.'

Gleeful motorists on Interstate 285 in Dunwoody, Ga., were showered with at least \$175,000 when the door of an armored car swung open, authorities said. Viral video captured the aftermath as dozens of opportunistic drivers pulled over and parked in the middle of the road, taking to the streets to collect as much as their fists would allow. Dunwoody Police said there were no

crashes or injuries as a result of the windfall, and authorities were able to recover a few hundred dollars at the scene.

Taking the money was technically theft, the department wrote on Facebook, though they could "certainly understand the temptation i Many poked fun at the department's

plea to return the cash and "do the right

"I could have sworn the law was 'finders keepers" one woman wrote in response.

By Wednesday night, however, a handful of people had stepped forward to return a chunk of the money, according to Dun-woody Police spokesman Sgt. Robert Parsons. The five good Samaritans turned in a combined \$4,400, highlighted by Randrell Lewis, who Parsons said delivered \$2,100 to the department

Speaking with local NBC affiliate 11 Alive, Lewis said he initially thought the cash showering his car late Tuesday was leaves. When he learned the leaves were actually dollar bills, he "pulled over and started picking up as much as [he] could.

The man briefly fantasized about how

the money could benefit him and his family, he explained. But those dreams were cut short as local news reports elaborated on the potential consequences the drivers who took money could face.

"The news said that it's theft, it's stealing, it's a crime and you must turn it [in] so I have to," he told 11 Alive.

In Lewis' case, he may have avoided a felony. Under Georgia law, retrieving money from the highway constitutes "theft of mislaid property," which makes it a mis-demeanor to keep lost items "without first taking reasonable measures to restore the property to the owner."

Trump Doral cancels strip club golf tourney

By ALEX DAUGHERTY Miami Herald

WASHINGTON — After a Miami youth basketball charity said it would not accept money from a charity golf event this weekend at President Donald Trump's Doral resort promoted by a Haileah strip club, Trump's company canceled the event Wednesday evening.

The Trump Organization said it shelved Shadow Cabaret's tournament after the Miami Allstars Foundation, the charity, dropped out, The Washington Post reported Wednesday evening.

"The event was originally booked with the understanding that it would be raising money to support a local charity benefiting underprivileged children,"

a Trump Organization spokeswoman said in a statement to the Post. "Now that the charity has removed its affiliation, the event will no longer be taking place at our property and all amounts paid will be refunded."

Carlos Alamilla, the director of the Miami All Stars, said his organization was unaware the charity event was run by Shadow Cabaret, a Hialeah strip club, until a Washington Post reporter called him about it. Alamilla said an event promoter had reached out to him to ask if his organization would like to benefit from a charity golf tournament at Trump Doral, and he'd accepted despin his opposition to the president.

He said he was unaware strippers would be involved.

"It's shocking to me that I've been dealing with some people at the strip tease club," Alamilla said in an interview with the Miami Herald. "To me, it was focused on the golf and the tournament. I was never told that the strip club

would be involved in this."

The Washington Post reported that golfers attending the event would be able to choose their own female caddie and after a round of golf and a meal at BLT Prime, attendees would return to the strip club for a "very tasteful" burlesque show that could involve weight.

Emanuele Mancuso, Shadow Cabaret's marketing director, said he could not comment on the charity's decision to pull out of the event because he wanted to speak with a lawyer.

"This is not a political event,

they (The Washington Post) put the news out," Mancuso said. "I don't understand why the Washington Post is making a big deal out of this. This is not the first time that a gentleman's club has put on these kind of events and it won't be the last time."

Alamilla also said Shadow Cabaret used the National Basketball Association's logo on the event invitations without his permission or the NBA's permission. After the Post reported on the event Monday, Alamilla said he received a call from the NBA's lawvers.

Police: Pet dogs ate missing Texas man

By Hannah Knowles The Washington Post

The bone pieces found on the man's overgrown trailer-and-shed property were suspicious. But the truth didn't hit the sheriff's deputies until they inspected some dog feces and found what looked like human hair and bits of clothes.

Freddie Mack had been eaten by his only companions at his rural home near Venus, Texas: his 18 dogs.

"Our initial reaction was kind of disbelief, because there was nothing left," Johnson County Sheriff Adam King told The Washington Post.

It's surprisingly common for animals to eat human remains, Johnson said.

But the whole body, clothes and

The senior investigators the sheriff's office consulted with had never heard of pets consuming an entire person before, he said.

The final confirmation came Tuesday when detectives learned that medical examiners had identified the few remnants deputies collected as Mack's.

It's not clear whether the large mutts killed the 57-year-old or devoured him after he died of his "serious medical conditions," King said. The sheriff's office is not disclosing Mack's medical information.

Mack first came to the sherif's attention in May when a family member said he had not heard from his reclusive relative in weeks. Mack kept to himself, King said, his only reliable human contact coming every two weeks or so when family dropped by to take him to the store.

Wondering about Mack, relatives had tried to search his property, but the dogs were aggressive and kept them out, according to the sheriff's office. Deputies, too, struggled to get past the animals. They managed to distract them and even surveyed with a drone when the dogs held them back on another visit — but they couldn't locate Mack.

Declaring Mack missing, deputies began interviewing family and neighbors, asking for information on social media, contacting hospitals and jails.

A breakthrough came May 15 when a deputy found the first, small piece of bone during another property search. More bone parts followed. With the dogs seized and out of the way, authorities discovered dog feces with hair, more bone and fabric remnants that matched the only outfit Mack was known to wear, the sheriff's office said. Soon, deputies found one of Mack's two pairs of shoes in the area where the dogs had been penned.

"That was another 'Aha' moment for us," King said. "That's when we started realizing."

The implications were gory but not unprecedented. A 2017 National Geographic article found dozens of cases of pets eating their deceased owners detailed in 20 years of forensic science journals. A 2015 study on more than 60 instances of dogs mutilating dead bodies concluded that the animals tended to go after the nose and mouth, then to a lesser extent the arms and hands.

Earlier this year, a South Carolina woman died after her two boxer-mixes mauled her outside her mobile home - "eating her alive," as one witness who called 911 put it.

But Mack's case stands out for the thoroughness with which the dogs are him. His family members have been notified of the findings of the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office that the remains were Mack's, based on a family DNA match, the sheriff's office said.

As for the dogs, 13 have been killed because of their aggression and the mounting evidence that they killed their owner. Two had already been killed by other dogs.

The other three are still around. "They were friendly," King said.



JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER/A

Protesters talk to reporters outside a news conference about the construction of a new Big Island telescope Wednesday in Honolulu. Construction of the telescope will start again next week.

Building of divisive giant telescope atop mountain in Hawaii to resume

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Construction on a giant telescope will start again next week after lengthy court battles and passionate protests from those who say building it on Hawaii's tallest mountain will desecrate land sacred to some Native Hawaiians.

State officials announced Wednesday that the road to the top of Mauna Kea mountain on the Big Island will be closed starting Monday as equipment is delivered.

Scientists revere the mountain for its summit above the clouds that provides a clear view of the sky with very little air and light pollution. Astronomers say it will allow them to reach back 13 billion years to answer fundamental questions about the advent of the universe.

The Thirty Meter Telescope project got approval to move forward last month. While it was the final legal step, opponents vowed to keep fighting and even get arrested if necessary to stop construction.

Gov. David Ige said unarmed National Guard units will be used to transport personnel and supplies and enforce some road closures, but they will not be used in a law enforcement capacity during planned protests.

"We just are asking people to be safe ... we certainly would ask that they be respectful of those who have to work on this project," Ige said. "We certainly are being respectful of those who choose to voice their disagreement with the project — we understand that that's important as well."

Four protesters held signs in the reception area of the governor's office after officials announced construction plans. Protests at the mountain will be peaceful, Healani Sonoda-Pale said.

Rhonda Vincent said closing

the road to the mountain is like blocking access to a church.

"If we can't access our own gods, our own spirituality, isn't that wrong?" she said.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii sent a letter to Ige and other state officials expressing concern that the state recently purchased a long-range acoustic device known as a "sound cannon." The letter demanded that the state not use it for any anti-protest efforts or crowd control during telescope protests.

Hawaii Attorney General Clare Connors said the device isn't intended for any forceful use and will be used to communicate with large groups of people.

Opponents say the \$1.4 billion telescope will desecrate sacred land. Supporters say the cutting-edge instrument will bring educational and economic opportunities to Hawaii.

Diplomats: Leak unlikely to have lasting impact

WASHINGTON - The abrupt resignation of Britain's ambassador to the United States over leaked cables critical of the Trump administration may have jolted official Washington, but it's unlikely to have a lasting impact on the U.S.-British relationship or diplomatic practice.

Current and former diplomats say the leak of Ambassador Kim Darroch's sensitive reports is unfortunate and alarming, particularly given the apparent political motive behind it. Yet, they believe any complications will be temporary even as they create shortterm turbulence in relations.

"It's a problem, but I don't know that it has a chilling effect over time because in the end people have jobs to do and they do their said Ronald Neumann, a retired three-time U.S. ambassador who is the president of the American Academy of Diplomacy. "It's wrong and it's too had Still you move on because there's work to

Darroch, a well-known figure in Washington, resigned Wednesday amid an uproar over the can-did cables, saying "the current situation is making it impossible for me to carry out my role as I would like." The resignation followed President Donald Trump's furious caustic response to the leaked cables in which Darroch offered candid negative views of his administration.

In the cables, Darroch called the administration's policy toward Iran "incoherent," said the president might be indebted to "dodgy Russians" and raised doubts about whether the White House will ever look competent.

Trump's lambasting of Darroch on Twitter - he called the ambassador "a pompous fool" and "a very stupid guy" and criticized outgoing British Prime Minister Theresa May — drew condemnation from both sides of the Atlantic.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who is in the running to replace May, replied, "Allies need to treat each other with respect.

Others suggested that Trump's reaction proved Darroch's point.

"Trump's petty and vindictive overreaction not only reinforces the accuracy of Darroch's portrait of him in his leaked cables, but further erodes an already complicated bilateral relationship, said William Burns, a highly respected retired career diplomat who served as deputy secretary of state during the Obama administration and is president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The State Department downplayed the fracas: "The United States and the United Kingdom share a bond that is bigger than any individual, and we look forward to continuing that partnership. We remain committed to the U.S.-UK Special Relationship and our shared global agenda.

In the long run, few believe damage to the "special relationship" caused this week will be severe or lingering.

"The state-to-state relationship is much more than one person, particularly with Britain," Neumann said



Debris is strewn along a beach Thursday at Vergia village in Halkidiki region, northern Greece, after a

Lethal storm lashes Greece

Associated Press

THESSALONIKI, Greece -The death toll from a violent storm that struck northern Greece increased to seven Thursday, after a body found at sea off the coast of the stricken area was identified as that of a missing fisherman.

The body of the 62-year-old was located by an air force helicopter 6.8 nautical miles off the coast of the Halkidiki peninsula. and was later identified by relatives, the coast guard said. The fisherman had taken his boat out Wednesday afternoon shortly before the storm and had been miss-

ing since. Wednesday night's violent storm snapped trees and power pylons, tossed vehicles and flung beach lounge chairs into trees, leaving swathes of debris across the coastline.

A state of emergency was declared in the region, a three-finger peninsula near the northern city of Thessaloniki that is popular with tourists in the summer. Government spokesman Stelios Petsas said 23 people remained



An overturned vehicle is seen on a Sozopoli village beach Thursday.

hospitalized Thursday, including a woman in critical condition. Six of the dead were tourists: two each from Russia, the Czech Republic and Romania.

Two of those who died were killed when high winds overturned their recreational vehicle, while an 8-year-old boy and his mother were killed when an outdoor restaurant's lean-to roof collapsed. Another two were killed by falling trees.

Crews were working to re-

store power that was knocked out to 80% of the stricken area. The fire department said it had received more than 1,200 calls for assistance throughout northern Greece, including 600 in Halkidiki.

Powerful storms also struck the neighboring south-eastern region of North Macedonia, ripping up trees, rooves and power pylons, damaging farms and orchards and blocking roads. No injuries

10K turtles, 30 live big cats among animals seized in global wildlife trafficking operation



Ecuadorian Environmental Police officers hold a snapping turtle during checkpoint inspections in Santo Domingo de los Tsachilas,

PARIS - Police and customs officials have carried out the most widespread anti-wildlife-trafficking operation ever in a joint global operation that's led to the seizure of thousands of endangered animals and the arrest of nearly 600

The World Customs Organization and Interpol said Wednesday that in June they conducted nearly 2,000 seizures in a historic joint operation that helped local authorities round up nearly 10.000 live turtles and tortoises. nearly 1,500 live reptiles, 23 live apes, 30 live big cats, hundreds of pieces of elephant tusk, half a ton of ivory and five rhino horns.

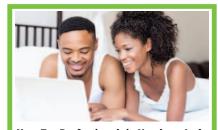
"It's landmark. It's the first

time such a large joint network has been mobilized — across 109 countries," Interpol wildlife expert Henri Fournel said.

Interpol released searing images from the global trafficking haul: thousands of protected tortoises crawling over each other in a dark container in Kazakhstan; an inquisitive-looking white tiger cub concealed in a pick-up in Mexico; and elephant tusks lined up on the ground in Kenya.

Operation Thunderball, which operated out of Interpol's innovation complex in Singapore, led to the arrest of 582 suspects, it said.

The WCO noted slight declines in the seizures of certain species, "a sign that continued enforcement efforts are bearing fruit.



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WORLD

N. Korea vows to 'destroy' F-35s bought by South

By Hyung-Jin Kim Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea slammed South Korea over its ongoing deployment of hightech U.S. fighter jets, warning Thursday that it will respond by developing and testing unspecified special weapons of its own to "destroy" the aircraft.

The statement, which also urged South Korea to abandon its "preposterous illusions" for improved ties, comes as Seoul has expressed hopes that a recent summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will help revive dialogue between the Koreas.

Under its biggest-ever weapons purchase, South Korea is to by 40 F-35 fighter jets from Lockheed Martin by 2021. The first two arrived in March and two others are to be delivered in coming weeks, according to Seoul officials.

The project was announced in 2014 to cope with then-rising military threats from North Korea, which was conducting an unusually large number of weapons tests. Animosities have graduly eased since last year when Pyongyang and Washington launched nuclear negotiations, but Seoul has been moving ahead with its already approved F-35 procurement.

On Thursday, the North's Foreign Ministry fired off fresh criticism, claiming the second batch of F-35s is coming in South Korea in mid-July, something that Seoul officials won't confirm.

An unidentified policy research director at the ministry's Institutes for American Studies said Seoul's purchase of the U.S. jets was meant to "please the United States, their master, like eating mustard in tears," though Seoul

knows well the project is an "extremely dangerous action" that will increase military tensions.

The director said North Korea has "no other choice but to develop and test the special armaments to completely destroy the lethal weapons reinforced in South Korea."

The South Korean government didn't immediately respond to the North's statement. But arms procurement officials said the F-35 project would proceed as scheduled and that about 10 of the 40 jets were to be delivered by the end of this year.

Despite the warning, it's unclear if North Korean can conduct a major weapons test anytime soon because that would likely disrupt a positive atmosphere after the June 30 summit between Trump and Kim at the Korean border village of Panmuniom.

Though it lacked substance, the impromptu meeting was the first between Trump and Kim since their second summit in Vietnam in February collapsed without any agreement due to squabbling over U.S.-led sanctions on the North, and the two leaders agreed to resume working-level nuclear talks.

The latest statement didn't criticize the U.S. directly. It was seen as more of a continuation of North Korea's sensitivity to the introduction of sophisticated U.S. weapons on the Korean Peninsula and dissatisfaction with Seoul since the Vietnam summit's breakdown.

South Korean liberal President Moon Jae-in, who favors a negotiated resolution of the nuclear crisis, shuttled between Washington and Pyongyang last year to facilitate a flurry of diplomacy between the countries. He met Kim three times last year.



PILLS KOLO/AP

Locals stand by the bodies of victims recovered in recent tribal violence in Karida, Papua New Guinea, on Monday. Police and soldiers have been dispatched after a tribal feud left more than 20 people dead.

More than 20 killed in Papua New Guinea

Issociated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — Police and soldiers have been sent to Papua New Guinea's highlands to make arrests and provide security after more than 20 people, mostly women and children, were slain in recent tribal violence over a feud that has lasted for years, officials said Wednesday.

In the latest attack, 16 women and children were killed this week by assailants armed with rifles in the village of Karida in Hela province, said Papua New Guinea acting Police Commissioner Francis Tokura.

Because two of the victims were pregnant, police put the death toll at 18. Officials differ on whether the attack happened on Sunday or Monday.

Authorities say the slaughter was probably retaliation for an ambush near Peta village on Saturday that left six or seven people dead.

Tokura said 20 police officers and 10 soldiers were sent to Hela to "stop any further violence and capture the killers."

"This is a tragedy. It is an unbelievable, unthinkable and atrocious criminal act that must be dealt with swiftly and severely," Tokura said in a statement.

"We will use all available resources to bring the killers to justice," he added. Prime Minister James Marape said many of the victims lived in his electorate.

"Today is one of the saddest days of my life," he said on social media.

Marape blamed a police shortage in Hela for the lawlessness.

"How can a province of 400,000 people function with policing law and order with under 60 policemen ...?" he wrote.

"To all who have guns and kill and hide behind the mask of community, learn from what I will do to criminals who killed innocent people, I am not afraid to use strongest measures in law on you," he wrote, referring to the death penalty.

Tribal violence is common in Papua New Guinea's interior, where villagers avenge relatives in retaliation.

Hela official Rex Humbi said the latest violence was part of a tribal war that had been waged for more than 15 years.

"The people that got killed were innocent women and children," he said. "The police do go and investigate. They have the authority, of course, but don't have the firepower" to bring the killers to justice.

The killers were possessed by Satan and "feed on the soul, or the spirits, of the innocents that have been lost," Humbi said.

Merkel sits for anthems after shaking episodes

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the visiting Danish prime minister sat through their countries' national anthems at a ceremony in Berlin, a day after the latest of three incidents in which Merkel's body shook as she stood at a similar event.

Merkel showed no signs of ill health as she sat alongside new Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen outside the chancellery in Berlin on Thursday — an unusual arrangement at a military honors ceremony.

On Wednesday, Merkel shook as he stood still alongside Finland's prime minister at the same spot. She later suggested that the spychological impact of the first shaking episode in mid-June was responsible for the subsequent incidents, saying that she "will have to live with if for a while" but

there's nothing to worry about. Leak found on sunken 1989 nuclear Soviet sub

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — A small radiation leak from a Soviet nuclear submarine that sank 30 years ago has been found, Norwegian researchers said Thursday, but it poses no risk to people or fish.

Hilde Elise Heldal, of the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research, said levels "weren't alarmingly high."

The institute said findings were around 100 Becquerel, or Bq, per liter compared with around 0.001 Bq per liter elsewhere in the Norwegian Sea.

Ševeral samples taken in and around a ventilation duct on the wreck of the submarine contained far higher levels of radioactive cesium than you would normally find in the Norwegian Sea, the institute said in a statement. However, other samples from the same duct didn't contain elevated values.

6 hospitalized after 5th bull run in Pamplona

PAMPLONA, Spain — One person was gored in the arm and five others were injured during the fifth bull run of this year's San Fermin festival in Pamplona, officials in the northern Spanish city said Thursday.

Regional hospital spokesman Tomas Belzunegui said the six were in need of hospital care after being injured during the race along the 930-yard cobbledstreet course to the bullring. The most serious injury was

suffered by a 27-year-old man from the Spanish city of Valencia who was gored in the arm. The other injuries were from blows received in falls as the crowds of runners tumble out of the way of the much faster bulls. The morning's run was pre-

ceded by a protest by some of the "runners," who sat on the street before the bulls were released.

Thursday's run was the longest

of this year's festival so far at 2 minutes, 49 seconds.

Japan: Space probe landed on asteroid to get soil sample

By MARI YAMAGUCHI believe contain valuable data uncommand center, everyone stood and brought home underground

By Mari Yamaguchi Associated Press

TOKYO — A Japanese spacecraft landed on a distant asteroid Thursday and collected underground samples that scientists hope will provide clues to the origin of the solar system billions of years ago, Japan's space agency said.

The Hayabusa2 spacecraft had

reated a landing crater on the rocky asteroid in April by dropping a copper impactor. It landed inside that crater Thursday and collected samples that scientists

affected by space radiation and other environmental factors. Hayabusa2 is the first space-

craft to successfully collect underground samples from an asteroid. A similar mission is planned by the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration on another asteroid, Bennu. The Japan Aerospace Explora-

tion Agency, or JAXA, said data shows Hayabusa2 touched down and rose safely after collecting the samples. The moment the success was announced in the up, cheered and applauded.
"It was a success, a big suc-

cess," said Takashi Kubota, a Hayabusa2 project member. "We achieved success in all scheduled procedures."

JAXA said the samples have been safely placed in a container, which will be moved to a capsule for secure storage.

"We obtained pieces of the history of the solar system. We took a historic step," said Yuichi Tsuda, the Hayabusa2 project manager. "Nobody has collected materials from anywhere further than the moon." Asteroids are rocky remnants

Asteroids are rocky remnants left over from the formation of the solar system.

With one of its most critical missions now finished, the next task is to get Hayabusa 2 to safely return to Earth with the samples, Tsuda said.

The actual landing lasted only a few seconds. It extended its sampling tube to the ground, shot a pinball-size bullet to break open the surface, and sucked up the debris that was blasted off.

From The Associated Press



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PAGE 17



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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Authorities: Company sold mislabeled crab

NC COLUMBIA — A North Carolina seafood company has been charged with selling almost 200,000 pounds of foreign crab meat falsely labeled domestic Atlantic blue crab for \$4 million.

Charges filed last month by the U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of North Carolina say Capt. Neill's Seafood of Columbia repackaged and mislabeled crab from Asia and South America as a "Product of the USA."

The charging documents accuse the company of selling the mislabeled crab meat from 2012 through 2015.

The company said the meat was still high quality and safe to eat.

Newlyweds say gifts stolen from hotel

Pour Delaware newlywed couples said thousands of dollars' worth of cash and gifts were stolen from them during separate weddings at the Hotel du Pont.

Three couples told the Delaware News Journal that they think the items went missing when hotel staff delivered champagne to the locked, unattended bridal suite as the couples socialized with guests downstairs.

The Wilmington Police Department said it's investigating four theft reports from the hotel since October 2018.

Hotel spokeswoman Shannon Maguire DeLucia told the paper they've "cooperated fully" with police.

Trooper stops speeding truck, saves passenger

ANDERSON — A state trooper who stopped a truck going 105 mph in central Indiana is credited with giving lifesaving first aid to the passenger, who was bleeding from a gash in his neck.

State police said Trooper Ron Huff stopped the speeding truck and the driver ran to him, yelling that his friend was dying. Huff found a man in his 20s holding a towel to his neck to cover the 4inch gash.

Huff used gauze treated with a clotting agent and direct pressure to stop the bleeding before an ambulance arrived.

The man had been helping renovate an unoccupied school when a wall mirror broke, cutting his neck

Couple buys home that inspired 'The Conjuring'

HARRISVILLE — A
Maine couple bought
a Rhode Island farmhouse that
inspired the horror movie "The
Conjuring."

Cory Heinzen told the Sun Journal in Maine that he's heard doors opening, footsteps and knocks. He said the house in Har-

risville is "very busy."

The movie is based on the story of a family that lived in the farmhouse in the 1970s.



PHOTOS BY CARLOS OSORIO/AP

Heinzen, of Mexico, Maine, said he and his wife hope to open the home to visitors and investigators later this year.

Message in a bottle found on beach

HIGH ISLAND — A message in a bottle tossed overboard last year by a Massachusetts couple sailing in the West Indies was found thousands of miles away on a Texas beach

The Houston Chronicle reported James Howie Hill, of Carthage, discovered the algaecovered green bottle near High Island.

That's nearly 2,400 miles from where George and June Smith, of Nantucket, Mass., threw the bottle into the water off Martinique. A note inside the bottle was dated Dec. 22. The Smiths wished the finder "good fortune" and

Tractor-trailer hauling garbage overturns

asked to be notified.

WARNER — New Hampshire troopers said a tractor-trailer hauling 60,000 pounds of garbage over-turned on the interstate, sending trash across the highway in Warner.

Tyler Cushman told WMUR-TV that he merged into the left THE CENSUS

The worth of Apple goods stolen by burglars at a Simi Valley, Calif, Best Bury. Detectives are looking for the burglary crew that cut a hole in the roof of the big-box retail store. Authorities said the burglars put a 24-foot ladder through the hole and climbed into

the store. The thieves then cut open a caged area in the store's warehouse that contained Apple products, police said.

lane when the truck entered the highway and he saw out of the corner of his eye that it was tum-

corner of his eye that it was tumbling over. Neither he nor the tractor-trail-

er driver were hurt.

State police said the driver of the tractor-trailer was charged with speeding.

More than 100 sheep killed in truck crash

AULT — Police said more than 100 sheep were killed when two trucks collided in northern Colorado.

The Coloradoan reported that the driver of a Waste Management semitrailer pulled out from a county road in front of a semi carrying about 300 sheep. The truck hauling the sheep landed on its side.

Police said the driver was taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

The driver of the Waste Management semi wasn't injured and was cited for careless driving.

Lobster boat skipper charged with OUI

ME STONINGTON — Officials said a lobsterman whose vessel collided with a recreational boat at the Stonington dock was charged with operating under the influence.

The Bangor Daily News reported that the Hancock County Sheriff's Department cited Brandon Murphy, 22, of Trenton after he allegedly failed a blood-alcohol test.

A Coast Guard response boat on hand for security during lobster boat races saw Murphy operating his boat, Black Thundah II, at the time of the crash.

No injuries were reported.

Dog that fled car crash reunited with owner

LITTLE EGGHARBOR

— A dog that went missing after a car crash in southern
New Jersey last month was re-

united with its owner

Jax, a rottweller-boxer mix, was riding in a car driven by Gabrielle McMillan, 23, of Little Egg Harbor when she struck a utility pole June 24. The car then rolled over and Jax escaped and ran off.

McMillan, who was injured in the crash, continues to recover at home.

Jax remained on the loose in the days after the accident despite numerous attempts to track him down. He was finally captured and reunited with McMillan this

Man pleads guilty to stealing lemur from zoo

CA SANTA ANA, Calif.

— A man who stole a ring-tailed lemur from a Southern California zoo pleaded guilty to a federal crime.

Aquinas Kasbar, 19, of Newport Beach entered the plea to unlawfully taking an endangered species. He could face up to a year in federal prison and a \$100,000 fine when he's entenced in October.

In a plea agreement, Kasbar acknowledged that he broke into the Santa Ana Zoo last year, cut a hole in the zoo enclosure for lemurs and took 32-year-old Isaac, the oldest captive ring-tailed lemur in North America.

The lemur was returned

From wire reports

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Stay connected and hey, welcome to the neighborhood.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Amazon 'Prime Day' tips before you spend

By Joseph Pisani Associated Press

YORK — Amazon's "Prime Day" is back, and so is the temptation to shop and overspend on stuff you don't need.

The made-up holiday, first held in 2015, has become one of Amazon's busiest shopping days, offering discounts on gadgets, TVs and other goods. But it's also a way for Amazon to get more people to sign up for its \$119-a-year Prime

membership. This year, despite its name, Prime Day is happening on two days, July 15 and 16.

Here are some tips for navigating the sales holiday

■ Plan ahead. To cut down on impulse purchases, write down what you want ahead of time and set a spending limit, said Ross Steinman, a professor of psy-chology at Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania.

Much of what is on sale is kent a secret until the event, but you'll be able to browse deals ahead of time on Amazon's app, the company says.

Based on past Prime Days, expect its deepest discounts to be on Amazon devices, like its voice-activated Echo speakers and Kindle

e-book readers

Sara Skirboll, a shopping expert at deals site RetailMeNot, recommends setting up a "Wish List" on the Amazon app and allowing it to send notifications so you can get alerts if those items get a price cut.

■ Slow down. Use the two days of discounts to your advantage. Before you buy, give yourself some time to think about whether you actually need the items you're eyeing.

It can help cut down on overspending, said Steinman.

"You have some time to cool off," he said.

■ Primeworkaround. The deals are only for Prime members. But if you're not a member, you don't have to pay the fee to take part. Amazon offers a 30-day free trial

when you sign up for Prime. Just remember to set a calendar reminder to cancel the subscription before you are charged \$12.99 a month or \$119 for the

■ Shop around. Other stores are crashing Amazon's party, which

means more deals for shoppers. Walmart, Target and eBay plan to offer their own online discounts during Amazon's Prime Day event

So make sure to search around on other sites to make sure it isn't cheaper elsewhere.

■ Price history. Use pricetracking websites, such as Camel-CamelCamel or Keepa, to see how the price of an item has changed

on Amazon over time. It can help you see if you're really getting the lowest price or if the item tends to be cheaper dur-

ing other times of the year. "Just because something is on sale, doesn't mean it's a great deal," said Skirboll.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates Euro costs (July 12)..... Dollar buys (July 12).....

Fed's message to Congress: Rate cut likely coming soon

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Pointing to a weaker global economy, rising trade tensions and chronically low inflation, Chairman Jerome Powell signaled Wednesday that the Federal Reserve is likely to cut interest rates late this month for the first time in a decade.

Delivering the central bank's semiannual report to Congress, Powell said that since Fed officials met last month, "uncertainties around trade tensions and concerns about the strength of the global economy continue to weigh on the U.S. economic outlook." In addition, inflation has dipped further below the Fed's annual target level.

The chairman's remarks led investors to send stock prices up, bond yields down and the value of the U.S. dollar lower on expectations of lower interest rates. The S&P 500 index briefly traded over 3,000 for the first time.

Testifying to the House Financial Services Committee, Powell was asked what he would do if President Donald Trump tried to fire or demote him. Powell offered the same terse reply he's given in the past when asked about Trump's attacks on his leadership and the president's insistence that he can remove the chairman: Powell said he intends to serve out his full four-year

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Country

Japan Change in price

Change in price

South Korea

term, which ends in early 2022.

The president has repeatedly accused Powell and the Fed of keeping credit too tight for too long and of thereby holding back the economy and the stock market. Most experts dispute Trump's assertion that he has authority to either fire Powell or demote him from the chairman's post, and his attacks have raised alarms that he's undermining the Fed's longrecognized independence from

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For the week

of July 12-18

Powell's description Wednesday of a more downbeat economic landscape led most economists to conclude that a quarter-point rate cut is a virtual certainty at the Fed's meeting in three weeks, with many forecasting further rate cuts to come.

Some characterized a likely rate cut late this month as an "insurance policy" against an economic downturn

MARKET WATCH July 10, 2019 Dow Jones 76.71 industrials 26.860.20 Nasdaq 60.80 composite 8.202.53 Standard & 13.44 Poor's 500 2.993.07 Russell 2.46

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British pound (July 21)	\$1.29
Japanese yen (July 12) South Korean won (July 12)	106.00
South Korean won (July 12)) 1,147.00
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Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.2548
Canada (Dollar)	1.3074
China (Yuan)	6.8691
Denmark (Krone)	6.6331
Egypt (Pound)	16.6181
Euro	\$1.1257/0.8883
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8214
Hungary (Forint)	289.56
Israel (Shekel)	
Japan (Yen)	108.30
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3034
Norway (Krone)	8.5420
Philippines (Peso)	51.22
Poland (Zloty)	3.79
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7488
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3563
South Korea (Won)	1,174.81
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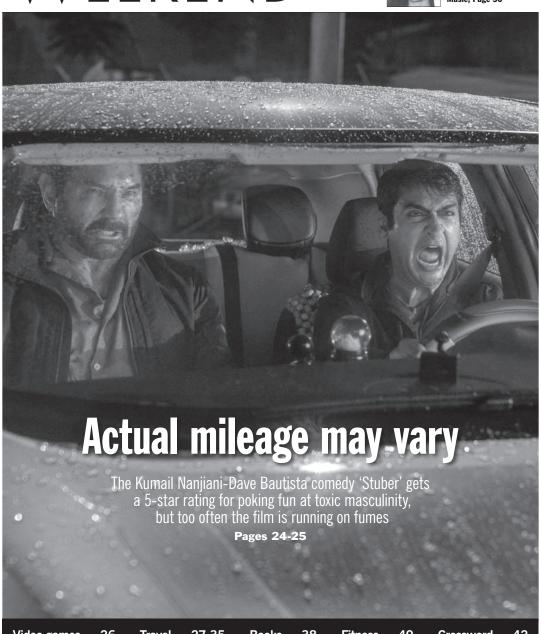




WEEKEND



Ariana Grande in 7 songs Music, Page 36



WEEKEND: GADGETS

Bring automation to old | GADGET WATCH tech with smart plugs

lenty of products for our homes have gotten smart makeovers in recent years. But what about the ones that haven't? That's where smart plugs come in. These nifty gadgets connect your regular old coffee maker, lamp, fan or nearly anything else to your smart home for voice control and automation. These are CNET's best bets for bringing the rest of your home online.

Belkin WeMo Mini Wi-Fi Smart Plug

Product review: tinyurl.com/ y2jmxgeg

CNET rating: 4.0 stars out of 5 (Excellent)

The good: At \$30 (or less), the new WeMo Mini is competitively priced, and the smaller design won't block adjacent outlets. Native compatibility with IFTTT, Google Home, Apple HomeKit and Amazon's Alexa make it one of the most well-connected smart plugs you can buy. The bad: The WeMo Mini won't

track energy usage like other smart plugs will. And, though you probably won't use it very much, the WeMo app is sluggish and glitchy at times

The cost: \$24.99 to \$29.99 The bottom line: There's plenty of new competition out there, but

the WeMo Mini is still one of the easiest smart home gadgets for us to recommend.



The Outdoor Switch from iDevices is great for holiday decorators.

iDevices Outdoor Switch Product review: tinyurl.com/

yyka4zfl

CNET rating: 4.0 stars out of 5 (Excellent) The good: The iDevices Out-

door Switch is convenient, filling a niche not many smart plugs have attempted to fill, and the power tracking will help savvy holiday decorators save money



Belkin's WeMo Mini Wi-Fi Smart Plug is well priced and designed.

The bad: You can't control the dual outlets individually, the price is kind of steep, and HomeKit user sharing can be a pain.

The cost: \$44.99 to \$79.95

The bottom line: The Outdoor Switch lets you flip on your holiday lights from the comfort of your couch and schedule them to turn off after you're asleep. With the added bonus of energy monitoring and the new remote access, those willing to dish out \$80 will get a solid product.

TP-Link Kasa Smart Wi-Fi Plug Mini

Product review: tinyurl.com/ v6t2w686

CNET rating: 3.5 stars out of 5 (Very good)

The good: This smart plug keeps other outlets free, works with Google Assistant and Amazon Alexa, and offers plenty of sched-

uling and timing options. The bad: The TP-Link Kasa Wi-Fi Smart Plug Mini isn't HomeKitcompatible. The cost: \$17.99 to \$31.99

The bottom line: This smart plug is great for anyone interested in scheduling, voice commands and remote access to everyday devices up to 1,500 watts.

Eufy Smart Plug Mini

Product review: tinyurl.com/

CNET rating: 3.5 stars out of 5 (Very good)

The good: The Eufy Smart Plug Mini is a smart, affordable spacesaver with a solid mix of in-app features. It works with both Alexa and the Google Assistant.

The bad: It doesn't work with HomeKit and it doesn't include a side USB charging port. The cost: \$42.57

The bottom line: With plenty of options for scheduling and energy monitoring, this is a great addition to any smart home.



The ScanMyPhotos one-cent photo scanning option provides scans at 150 DPI, making them perfect for social media and website use.

A penny for your photo scans

By GREGG ELLMAN Tribune News Service

anMyPhotos has a great summer project for everyone who has boxes of photos. Yes, actual prints, not digital copies - at least just yet.

The company can take 4,000 photos of these images and scan them for just \$40 in a one cent photo scanning option. With that deal, there really isn't an excuse not to get your prints digitally scanned and protected.

The one cent scans have a 150 DPI, making them perfect for social media and website usage. There's an upcharge for larger scanned resolutions with choices of 300 DPI for seven cents each and 600 DPI for 15 cents each.

There's no limit to how many photos you can get scanned. The one cent option has a 10,000 photo maximum and \$40 minimum per order (S&H not included). Even if it's just a handful of photos needing to be scanned, there's a flexible pay-per-scan

Things to note: Your photos must be at least 3-by-3 inches and no larger than 8-by-10 inches and removed from albums. staples and anything else attached to them. Negatives, slides and other media are not accepted for scanning. Everything, including instructions on how to package your photos for shipping, is clearly explained on the ordering

Your original photos are delivered with the scans in options including thumb drives and

Other options with additional charges include same-day scanning and instant uploading, which means that the day the order is received it's scanned, uploaded and in your possession.

I'm a past user of the service and years after getting my family archives scanned, they are still looked at regularly, where the shoeboxes of closeted photos were basically never looked at when in print format.

Online: scanmyphotos.com

Before I put the sound to my ears, I was reminded by a Mixcder company representative that Mixcder is known for high-quality, cost-friendly active noise control headphones. After using the Mixcder E9 ANC wireless headphones for a week, I find that statement to

I'm not saying they are the best headphones you can get, but they do come with excellent sound and all the features you would want, easily justifying the \$69.99 price tag.

They are built with an ergonomic design; they're lightweight (8.9 ounces), have an adjustable black headband and comfortable soft and rotating foam ear pads. The latter is as important as the sound. Their portable construction allows them to fold nicely when they need to be tucked away for storage.

An airplane adapter and a lightweight

hard carrying case are included. According to Mixcder, the sound is delivered from "40 mm drivers for a powerful, wide-band fre-

20,000Hz with an impactful bass, rich and detailed midrange, and clear treble

quency from 20Hz-

for a crisp sound up to 94 decibels." The music sounded well-balanced to me,

with deep bass, midtones and treble.

MIXCDER/TNS

The active noise-cancelling feature works well and you can turn it on or off. While it's on, some of your outside surroundings will be blocked, and when it's off you'll hear a little more. Either way, you'll hear your music with great clarity. The ANC just determines how much outside noise you want to tolerate.

Being able to turn off the noise-canceling feature can be useful - if you're poolside, you might want to block out the world but walking city streets might be a place to have some of your surroundings heard.

Bluetooth 4.0 makes the wireless connection, and the internal 500mAh rechargeable battery will last for about 30 hours of playtime with active noice canceling off, 24 hours with it on. Recharging takes only 2.5 hours. The 'phones can also be used with the auxiliary port.

One feature I found so helpful is the larger buttons for on-headset control of handsfree calls with the built-in microphones, music choices and volume.

Online: mixcder.com; \$79.99 or \$69.99 when available at Amazon

WEEKEND: ENTERTAINMENT

The 'Seinfeld' factor

30 years later, stars recall how the 'show about nothing' boosted or, in some cases, started — their Hollywood careers

By Christi Carras Los Angeles Times

t's been 30 years since "Seinfeld" catapulted Jerry Seinfeld, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Jason Alexander and Michael Richards into superstardom. But the sitcom, which premiered (as "The Seinfeld Chronicles") July 5, 1989, featured other familiar faces

They just weren't familiar at the time. Before starring in hit TV series from "Lost" to "Breaking Bad," many now-established performers booked guest roles on "Seinfeld" early in their careers. Decades later, Bob Odenkirk, Patton Oswalt, Kathy Griffin, Daniel Dae Kim and Molly Shannon recalled their awe and trepidation when they first stepped onto the set of the show about nothing, which evolved into what Odenkirk called a "top-notch, economically run laugh machine.'

By the time he made his "Seinfeld" debut as Ben, Elaine's almost-doctor-boyfriend in Season 8's "The Abstinence," the actor already had experience working on comedy series such as "The Ben Stiller Show" and "Saturday Night Live," but "Seinfeld" marked another level of efficiency and professionalism.

"It was this very well-run machine of hilarity, with total pros all around me - something I wasn't entirely used to," Odenkirk said.

To this day, the "Better Call Saul" star still regards "Seinfeld" as "one of the best sitcoms ever." And its pop-cultural significance wasn't lost on him when he sat down for the table read.

"It was obviously intimidating because it was such an excellent show, and the confidence that everyone exuded in executing it, by that point, was very strong," Odenkirk said, "But it wasn't unwelcoming, Sometimes when (people) are that sure of themselves, you can really feel like an outsider. I've had that experience, but that wasn't the case.

For Oswalt, "Seinfeld" marked a major milestone: his first acting credit. The comedian and "Veep" star, who also appears in the forthcoming revival of "Veronica Mars," scored a one-off role in the sitcom's seventh season as a video store clerk. And he, like Odenkirk, was amazed at the streamlined production process.

"They almost shot the episodes in real time," Oswalt

said. "It wasn't even machinery at that point. It was like watching a dance company that could just do every move, and comedically, it was stunning.

Though "Seinfeld" was not her first TV gig, Griffin



HULTON ARCHIVE. GETTY IMAGES/TNS

"Seinfeld" starred, from left, Jerry Seinfeld, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Jason Alexander and Michael Richards.

experienced a similar feeling of anxiety stepping into her role as chatterbox Sally Weaver in Season 7's "The Doll.

"To walk onto that set for a table read and see that cast, which was obviously by then so legitimately iconic, I admit, I had to take a minute and calm my ass down and go, 'All right, Kathy, you've been an actress since you were 17 years old. Try to keep it together," Griffin said. "That is something I won't forget."

Like Odenkirk and Oswalt, Griffin found the cast to be welcoming and supportive - except for Seinfeld. In fact, she disliked the star comedian so much that she later spent part of her 1996 appearance on "HBO Comedy Half-Hour" bashing his behavior.

Soon after the program aired, Griffin received a "super condescending but funny" letter from Seinfeld, and their exchanges became the premise for her second "Seinfeld" appearance: In Season 9's "The Cartoon," Sally performs stand-up at Jerry's expense. But on set, their relationship took a positive turn.

"I just fell in love with him, then, because I was like,

'Oh, my God — a giant, A-list celebrity who actually

has a sense of humor about himself," Griffin said.
"Lost" alumnus Kim was also surprised to see Seinfeld in a rare behind-the-curtain moment when he arrived on set to film his scene in Season 9's "The Burning." Kim, a super-fan who "had literally seen every single episode of the show," was forced to do a double take when he glimpsed the comedian casually munching on a bowl of cereal straight from one of the prop boxes in his on-screen apartment.

Seinfeld's next move shocked him even more. "He said to me, 'Daniel, you were really funny in the audition," Kim said. "Because I was getting a compliment from Jerry Seinfeld, the only thing I could think of was, "Thanks! You're not so bad yourself.' And then he paused, and he said, 'Yeah, I do OK.' That was my first conversation with Jerry, and I'll never forget that

To the relative newcomers, earning Seinfeld's approval was a big deal. "Saturday Night Live" alum Molly Shannon still fondly remembers how he reacted to her audition to play Elaine's eccentric co-worker Sam in Season 8's "The Summer of George." "Jerry really laughed when I showed him a demon-

stration of a girl with long arms walking quickly, with her long arms not swinging as she walks," Shannon said. "I loved that I made Jerry laugh. I really do have long arms, so I think I lucked out in that I was right for the part."

Despite the credits they've amassed since, the stars still wear their stints on "Seinfeld" as badges of honor. Kim, now an executive producer (with a recurring role) on ABC's "The Good Doctor," is proud that some still recognize him as the medical student who identified Kramer's gonorrhea.

"It was a real feather in my cap," Kim said. "It's been a little while since then, but the legacy of that show is indisputable.'

Though Shannon had already begun to make a name for herself as the nerdy Mary Katherine Gallagher on "Saturday Night Live," booking "Seinfeld" was a "lifechanging" moment — especially when it meant getting to partner with another "SNL" veteran, "comedy legend" Louis-Drevfus.

"I had wanted to get cast as a guest star on that show ever since it first began, and my dream came true Shannon said. "The comedy writing is brilliant. What Jerry and Larry (David) did was legendary. Each comedy episode was a little brilliant puzzle with everything that's being set up and paid off in such a clever way."



It was this very well-run machine of hilarity, with total pros all around me — something I wasn't entirely used to.

Bob Odenkirk who played Elaine's would-be doctor boyfriend in Season 8's "The Abstinence"



They almost shot the episodes in real time. ... It was like watching a dance company that could just do every move, and comedically, it was stunning. 7

Patton Oswalt who played a video store clerk in Season 6's "The Couch"



*To walk onto that set for a table read and see that cast ... I had to (tell myself) ... "You've been an actress since you were 17 years old. Try to keep it together."

> **Kathy Griffin** who played a comedian in Season 7's "The Doll"



It was a real feather in my cap. It's been a little while since then. but the legacy of that show is indisputable. 7

Daniel Dae Kim who played the medical student who identified Kramer's gonorrhea in Season 9's "The Rurning"



I loved that I made Jerry laugh. I really do have long arms. so I think I lucked out in that I was right for the part. 7

> **Molly Shannon** on her role as Elaine's eccentric coworker Sam in Season 8's "The Summer of George"

WEEKEND: MOVIES

An unexpected twist on buddy cop genre

Nanjiani, Bautista shoot down toxic masculinity in 'Stuber'

> By JEN YAMATO Los Angeles Times

heirs was a gentle friendship forged in the cozy confines of an eco-friendly Nissan Leaf, the electric car that serves as a roving setting for bromance in the new action-comedy "Stuber." In the driver's seat was Kumail Nanjiani, known for his work on "Silicon Valley" and the autobiographical romance "The Big Sick," starring as a high-strung Uber driver named Stu who picks up the rideshare fare from

Riding shotgun was wrestler-turned-actor Dave Bautista as Vic, the gruff cop who commandeers Stu's ride when Lasik surgery leaves him blurry-eyed moments before he gets a hot tip on the big-

gest case of his career.

They got to know each other last year on the Atlanta set of "Stuber," squeezed into the cab of a tricked-out silver Leaf for hours on end. They talked about work. They talked about

"A lot of times people aren't really interested enough to talk about personal stuff," said Bautista, joining Nanjiani in a Beverly Hills, Calif., hotel suite toward the tail end of a long day of promotion. "And sometimes you don't have time to spend with people. But we had a lot of time to spend together, and a lot of times it was just us, sitting in this car.'

How close did they get? Nanjiani was delighted to learn that Bautista has a collection of vintage lunchboxes. Walls and walls filled with them. "That really captures Dave, I think. He's kind of a kid at heart," said Nanjiani. He urged Bautista to describe his most prized item, a "Green Hornet" lunchbox featuring Bruce Lee as Kato.

"I love it so much because it's got Bruce Lee on it," said Bautista. "[It] was a big deal back then, especially to have an Asian character on television back then who was legit badass; he was somebody I grew up admiring, and someone I could connect and relate to.

Returning the admiration, Bautista offered: "I have a lot of favorite things [about Nanjiani], but one thing that stuck in my head is that Kumail is really drawn to sad songs. I thought it was odd and beautiful at the same

Nanjiani nodded, confirming that, like his costar, he'd looked to another Bruce for inspiration in his youth: Bruce Springsteen.

"In high school I would listen to all [his] sad songs," he said, revealing how watching the documentary "Springsteen on Broadway" took him back. "I was proud of myself because I used to need these songs, and now I just like these songs. But there was a version of Kumail

who really needed these songs to survive."

The pair forged their paths to "Stuber" from the very different worlds of wrestling and comedy, respectively:
Bautista grew up in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. and made his WWE debut in 2002; around the same time, the Karachi, Pakistan-born Nanjiani started doing stand-

When they landed "Stuber," they called the same mutual friend, "Guardians of the Galaxy" director James Gunn, for intel. "We both hit him up," said Bautista. 'What's Kumail like?' And James, who I trust very

much, had the highest praise.'

Made by Canadian director Michael Dowse ("Goon," "What If") from a script by Tripper Clancy, "Stuber" is a throwback buddy cop actioner that pays homage to '80s action comedies such as "Midnight Run," "48 Hrs." and "Lethal Weapon." It takes inspiration, according to Dowse, from quintessentially L.A. movies including "To Live and Die in L.A.," "Heat," "Training Day" and "52 Pick-Up."



20th Century Fo

Kumail Nanijani, left, and

Dave Bautista, left, and Kumail Nanjiani spent long hours together in the cab of a Nissan Leaf while filming "Stuber" in Atlanta.

"Stuber" adds an unexpected twist on the genre; an exploration of toxic masculinity amid the shootouts, fist fights, car chases and high jinks that ensue as Stu. desperate for a five-star rating, begrudgingly takes Vic across Los Angeles and back on the trail of the ruthless criminal (Iko Uwais) who killed his partner.

'We wanted to embrace those movies that we all loved growing up, but at the same time we didn't want to make it in a vacuum," said Dowse. "Those movies aren't necessarily that politically correct or can be a little bit sexist, so in both ways we wanted to celebrate those movies but also make them a little bit more modern and take on themes without being too preachy.'

Casting the right onscreen pair was an exercise in chemistry. Where Bautista's easily angered, no-nonsense Vic channels that kind of big '80s macho energy, Nanjiani's chatty Stu is averse to risk, violence and confrontation - until both men learn to meet in the middle.

'Stu is a people-pleaser," said Nanjiani. "He's got his code of honor when it comes to being an Uber driver, and he's way too polite. He's a little oppressive with his niceness." Vic is a divorced workaholic who can't ex-

press his emotions - not to Stu, or his boss on the force (Mira Sorvino), or the daughter he loves.

'Vic's existence is tremendously sad," said Nanjiani. "He's someone who has people who love him and want to connect with him, and he doesn't do that. I feel like he's a guy who's imprisoned by his own conception of mascu-

linity and who he is ... you see men like that all the time." Bautista agreed. "Vic thinks like his dad — he brought him up and taught him to 'be a man,'" he said. "It's

pointed out later on that his dad was really just a dick." The two had not met before the film, but a chemistry test, with Nanjiani and Bautista in chairs close together to approximate Stu's compact Uber, sealed the deal. On set their approaches were polar opposites: Nanjiani, who also did writing work on the script, likes to have dialogue down pat while Bautista prefers to go in more loosely.

"You get a feel for a person, if they get frustrated with things or how prepared they are - or how irritated they get if you're not prepared," said Bautista. "And I'm never prepared, so I need someone who's patient and understands and is also supportive. I'm very big on mutual support. It's really important to me.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Buddy comedy 'Stuber' runs on fumes

By JAKE COYLE Associated Press

f you're going to see one comedy starring Kumail Nanjiani as an Uber driver, please make it the 2017 film he co-scripted, "The Big Sick." In "Stuber," Nanjiani is again behind the wheel of a compact ride-sharing vehicle, but this time, the comedy is running on fumes and the company (Zoe Kazan in "The Big Sick," Dave Bautista in "Stu-

ber") isn't nearly as good. Stu is nicknamed "Stuber" by his obnoxious boss at a sporting goods store in a nod to his side gig. He's conscripted by Bautista's Vic, a Los Angeles police detective temporarily blinded by LASIK surgery, to drive him around town. Vic can hardly see, but he's hell-bent on pursuing the most lethally acrobatic drug dealer you've ever seen (Iko Uwais of "The Raid") who months ago killed Vic's

Stu, desperate for a five-star rating, is reluctantly sucked into a "Beverly Hills Cop"-like buddy action comedy that quickly turns violent and a little shrill. Nanjiani and Bautista, the hulking former wrestler best known as Drax in the "Guardians of the Galaxy" films, make a suitably odd pair. Stu is sensitive and nerdy, and desperate for his best friend (Betty Gilpin) to take him seriously as a romantic partner. Vic is gruff and bumbling and often appears almost literally as a bull in a china shop.

Tripper Clancy's script — a kind of comic version of Michael Mann's "Collateral." with Tom Cruise as a contract killer and Jamie Foxx as his cabbie — crafts a hardly novel running dialogue of masculinity. Occasionally, it hits just right, like when Nanjiani summarizes their dynamic: "You're built for justice. I'm built



A mild-mannered Uber driver named Stu (Kumail Nanjiani, right) picks up grizzled detective Vic (Dave Bautista) who is hot on the trail of a bloodthirsty terrorist and finds himself thrust into a harrowing ordeal where he has to keep his wits, himself unharmed, and work with his passenger while maintaining his high-class rating in "Stuber."

for brunch." But most of the time, it flails around in a stale routine. During a fight at the sporting goods store, Stu exclaims: "Real men cry!"

The movie's premise is one long Uber ad, but it's a clever enough buddy comedy setup, and both Nanjiani and Bautista are good comic performers. So what's missing

here? Part of the trouble is that Bautista is playing too much to type (the twist on his brilliant Drax is that he's lovably emotional), and few actors benefit from having their eyes taken from them.

That leaves most of the comedy to Nanjiani, and he does an admirable job trying to give the material a lift. But director

Michael Dowse ("Goon") struggles to find the right tone, leaning more into slapdash action scenes than jokes. Any chance of sustained chemistry between the two leads recedes in the rearview mirror.

"Stuber" is rated R for violence and language throughout, some sexual references and brief graphic nudity. Running time: 93 minutes.



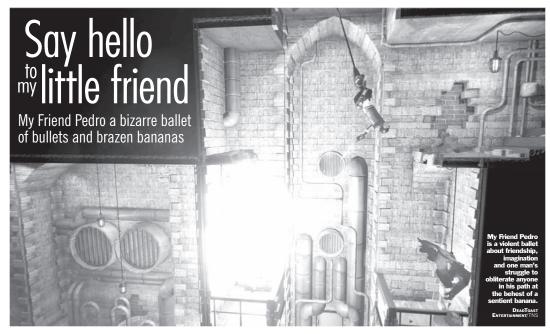


ALSO PLAYING

'Crawl'

A Category 5 hurricane leaves a young Florida woman (Kaya Scodelario) and her father (Barry Pepper, not pictured) trapped in a house where they must fight for their lives against flooding water and alligators in "Crawl." A review of the horror film was unavailable at press time. The movie is rated R for bloody creature violence and brief language. Running time: 87 minutes

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



By Brittany Vincent Shacknews.com

lose your eyes and picture this, if you will. You've just woken up in a butcher's freezer with no recollection of who you are or how you got there. You're terrified, angry and alone — except for some banana. But it's not a regular banana — no, not at all. This banana has a name. It's Pedro. And he's your ticket out of this nightmare. The only way out is with guns and a whole lot of crazy. Good thing, because you've got it in droves. Welcome to My Friend Pedro, a game all about pistol-whipping enemies, slowing down time and listening to your psychotic, fruity friend. Strap in, because it's going to be one hell of a ride.

A bloody ballet

As you work your way out of the butchery, which just happens to be used as something of a waste facility, you've got to arm yourself. Pedro wills it to be so, and you've got to make sure you're a force to be reckoned with. You wrestle a pistol away from a guard who has no idea what he's just gotten himself into (and kill him for fun), and it's off on a mission to fight your way through the area and possibly figure out who you are and why it is you're letting a floating banana give you orders.

You may be one man that slightly resembles Deadpool by way of your black mask, but you're mighty. From the very beginning of the game you've got your banan buddy and pistol, and two additional skills to help you move things along. You can slow down time to avoid bullets and spin to evade. Both can be used in tandem to make for some extremely fluid gameplay. Suddenly, when you slow down time, shooting some random dude in the face has so much more weight to it.

But there's more to combat than flipping and rolling and slowing down time. Your unnamed shooter is more than a little acrobatic and can pull off some seriously impressive parkour moves and more. You can aim with the right stick, pull the trigger and hit your mark with little effort. There's so much more to the game than that, though. You'll sprint through each level with the greatest of ease, dodging, rolling and zipping through enemies who can't touch you as you twist through the air slipping through a hail of gunfire like some kind of invincible flying dolphin. It's a beautiful thing — seriously.

Pistol-whipped

When you get your second pistol, though, that's where things really get crazy. You'll also get automatic Sequential Manual Gearboxes, a shotgun, sniper rifle, and plenty of other destructive weapons as well throughout the game, in addition to an ability to aim with one weapon and use the other to target one enemy. Basically, you can do a split shot that looks

and feels as awesome as it sounds.

The more weapons you amass, however, the more difficult the game becomes. Some enemies can be downed with a few well-timed shots as you fly through the air like you're on a trapeze, and others can one-shot you if you're not careful. You've got to constantly remain on guard, but when you figure out the best way to approach each enemy, you can cut through hordes of them like a hot knife through butter.

Of course, even the most well-timed bullets sent flying through the air are nothing when you're facing off against one of the game's five boss fights. Each one is themed differently, whether you're facing off against a bounty hunter Santa or zipping through the city streets of a neon cyberpunk fantasy land a la Final Fantasy. They add a bit more variety into the mix that can be fun to look forward to between lengthy segments where you're forced to figure out how to approach each unique combat situation, but they can be challenging if you don't approach them in the right way.

But there's more to the game than just skipping through battles and decimating everything in your path. Everything you do, you need to do it with style. You'll earn a ranking at the end of the game's eight lengthy levels, which will culminate from the style points you earn by killing off enemies in the most creative, cinematic ways you can. The key is to pretend like you're in an action movie and come up with some seriously insane kills to keep it rolling. It's easy to do when you can shoot in two different directions, use props in the game world to pull off some seriously decadent kills, and breach areas like you're in Call of Duty. You'll very quickly become addicted to the thrill of the kill, and the game rewards you for it.

What about Pedro, though? What role does he continue to play in the game beyond being your "best pal" and confidant, telling you to kill everyone? Sometimes you get to hang out with him at his house, which I won't spoil much about here. You'll know it when you see it.

Unfortunately, these segments are where some of the game's only real pit-falls occur. Pedro's home world will put you through some frustrating platforming areas that feel quite cheap, but you've got to complete them. The game would have been better served with additional shooter segments since the regular levels are orchestrated so well, but for those looking for a break from the constant action, they do serve their purpose.

Goin' bananas

My Friend Pedro is an amalgam of fantastic bullet play, thumping electronic bass beats throughout each level and hilariously weird characters. I'm still not sure how the folks at Deadtoast Entertainment came up with this gloriously addictive fever dream, but I'm an absolute fan of whatever creative process that allowed them to craft a dangerously stylish, addictive and exciting shooter that offers something new and unique for your Switch (or PC) library.

If you're a fan of ultraviolence, sen-

If you're a fan of ultraviolence, sentient pieces of fruit, attitude akin to that of games like Hotline Miami or dizzying gorefests, My Friend Pedro is for you. Give it a look and give the trigger a squeeze. You'll find it has a lot of ap-peel.

Platforms: Nintendo Switch, PC Online: devolverdigital.com/games/ my-friend-pedro

Review based on a Nintendo Switch download code provided by the publisher.



Stay smart

Family-friendly hotel options in 8 popular European destinations

By Amy Tara Koch Special To The Washington Post

icking the right hotel can make or break the vacation when you're traveling with kids. This can be especially challenging in Europe, where rooms are often tiny - some with just two twin beds - and prices, especially during the summer months, fly sky high.

What you need is space. Ideally, connecting rooms or a suite large enough to move around in during "down time" without bashing into a suitcase or waking a napping child. (Always look at size, which will be provided in square meters, and convert to feet so you understand what you are booking.) Location is important, but less so: If it has easy access to efficient public transportation, a hotel outside of the city center is fine. You also want a property that has high chairs, infant tubs, cribs and perks such as included breakfast.

We've done the scouting for you in eight popular European destinations. (Please note that rates have been converted into dollars, so they are approximate and fluctuate daily.)



The Presidential Terrace at the Mandarin Oriental Prague offers al fresco dining.

London

Spacious rooms and access to the charming neighborhood of Chelsea make the historic Sloane Square Hotel a great base from which to explore nearby museums (Natural History and Victoria and Albert), Buckingham Palace and Chelsea Physic Garden, an ancient botanic garden with wonderful programming for children. Book the club family room (\$455), which has a king-size bed and sofa bed plus an alcove with a twin bed. Or, interconnecting club king (\$437) with a superior twin room (\$393). Both include breakfast for children. Promotions run frequently online; rates often drop on Sundays.

Proximity to Kensington Gardens (Diana Memorial Playground, swan-filled Round Pond) and Hyde Park (horse riding, boating on the Serpentine lake and people-watching at Speakers' Corner) are some good reasons to stay at Royal Garden Hotel. Well-configured rooms and family friendliness (included breakfast, a backpack full of goodies, micro-scooters for kids to use in the park) are others. The executive room (\$436) has a king bed and alcove with a pullout sofa. The park suite (\$812) has a separate lounge with pullout sofa bed. The hotel's classic Queen Victoria afternoon tea is a memory-maker for the family.

In the same leafy neighborhood, Nadler Kensington offers modern rooms (superior fits three, \$240; deluxe fits four, \$277) equipped with kitchenettes. It has pricier properties in Soho and Covent Garden.

Rarcelona

An ideal perch to explore Las Ramblas. the fantastic Gaudi buildings, the Picasso museum and the city's excellent aquarium is Hotel Arts Barcelona, a soaring edifice of exposed glass and steel right on the beach with a swimming pool. In keeping with the edgy design aesthetic, rooms are airy and contemporary, with artwork by Catalan and Spanish artists. The family package offers an executive suite with two rollaway beds and breakfast for \$705. A family of three can book a deluxe room (\$445) and add a rollaway bed.

Four Points by Sheraton Diagonal is in the burgeoning 22@ district not far from museums, beaches and Gaudi's Sagrada Familia. Connecting classic rooms start

Lake Como

This sun-drenched pocket of northern Italy, with its picturesque towns, ochrehued villas and terraced gardens, has served as a vacation hot spot since ancient times. The newest property to hit the shores is the Mandarin Oriental Lago di Como. The deft revamp of this grand 19th-century villa within a botanic garden is certainly a splurge (duplex suites at \$1,325 or two unconnected, same-floor superior rooms from \$614 each). You'd be investing in a bucket-list vacation: a stay in a historic property with chic, modern rooms and majestic views (think lakefront aperitivo under the ancient plane trees), a 16-meter floating pool, water sports (stand-up paddleboarding and kayaking, water-skiing, wakeboarding) and a private boat that ferries guests around the lake.

Another revamped 19th-century villa, Hotel Villa Flori, offers spacious rooms with sweeping lake vistas, with breakfast included and impressive Old World details such as preserved stucco work, frescoes and parquet floors. The best option is connecting rooms, a classic (\$303) with superior (\$348) or deluxe (\$393) to junior suite (\$636)

Built in 2017 Hilton Lake Como has 170 rooms (family room \$451, suites \$564) and a lovely rooftop infinity pool. The property is across the street from the lake and a 15minute walk to bustling Como Town.

For convenience and classic Parisian elegance, pick Hotel Regina Louvre, a grande dame built for the 1900 World's Fair opposite the Louvre museum and adjacent to Jardin des Tuileries, Choose between a family room (essentially connecting rooms with a queen bed and two twins, \$752) or a family suite (\$992) which has a living area, a master bedroom and a room with bunk beds for children. A ju-nior suite (\$564) can work with one child.

There is often a 10% discount for families.

It's farther out, but spacious rooms and amenities such as no-additional-cost babysitting make Pullman Paris Bercy Hotel in the 12th arrondissement (close to Jardin des Plantes) in Bercy Village a prime pick. There are superior family rooms (\$280, fits four) and a family suite that can comfortably fit up to six (starting

If you seek lodging amid narrow, cobbled lanes in the center of the Eternal City's historical area (walking distance to Piazza Navona and Campo de' Fiori), Hotel Albergo Santo Chiara on the Piazza della Minerva is the ticket. What the spartan but modern rooms lack in wow factor they make up for in space (plus an included breakfast buffet) and access to Rome's coolest quadrant. Quadruple rooms (\$372) have a master sleeping area and separate room with a pair of twin beds. Suites (\$541) have a master bedroom and living room that doubles as second bedroom plus

Alternatively, you can choose an urban hideaway bordering Villa Borghese Gardens with that perk of perks: an outdoor swimming pool where families can unwind after sightseeing. The Gardens are Rome's largest green space, home to playgrounds, museums, puppet shows and the Bioparco di Roma zoo. A family room (two connecting superior rooms) at Aldrovandi Villa Borghese starts at \$880, breakfast included.

Vienna

There is nothing quite like a stay in a grand landmark hotel, and Vienna's Hotel Sacher Wein (opened in 1876 and the birthplace of Austria's prized pastry, the Sacher torte) across the square from the Vienna State Opera and close to the Albertina museum and Hofburg palace delivers the perfect blend of old world Austrian charm (soaring ceilings, oversized rooms splendid furnishings) and 21st-century comforts. Interconnecting rooms (\$507 per room) are best for a family of four. Ask about the "Stay 4, Pay 3"

promotion.

The Andaz Vienna, close to attractions such as the Wiener Prater and Schunn Zoo, is more contemporary. The loft-style executive suite sleeps four (\$434). Less pricey is the Aparthotel Adagio Vienna City, apartment-style lodging next to Julius-Raab-Platz near the Danube, a short distance from the city center. For a family of four, the one-bedroom apartments (\$304) have a queen bed with a sofa bed in the living room (cots are available as well as an infant bath and high chair) and fully equipped kitchen.

Prague

With its spires and cobblestoned streets, Prague is a dream for kids who love fairy tales. In medieval Mala Strana, the Mandarin Oriental Prague (connecting superior rooms \$295 per room, minimum three-night stay) is housed in a former 14th century monastery and is walking distance to Prague Castle, Petrin Hill, Charles Bridge and the astronomical clock in Old Town Square.

Aria Hotel pays homage to the city's musical heritage. Hotel floors are named by musical genre, and suites are dedicated to icons such as Dvorak, Beethoven and Billie Holiday. Another draw: a private entrance to Vrtba Garden, a UNESCO World Heritage site. A junior suite (one room) starts at \$434, the American Rock one-bedroom suite with sleeper sofa in the separate living area costs \$558, and the two-bedroom Beethoven suite runs \$902.

Another option? Apartment-style lodging with maid service and property managers who are available 24/7. Residence Karolina offers one-bedroom (\$135) and two-bedroom (\$248) apartments in Old Town, while sister property Residence Masna (a few minutes outside of Old Town) offers one-bedrooms (\$124).

Amsterdam

To truly experience the vibrancy of Amsterdam, you want to stay in the Nine Streets (De Negen Straatjes), a neighborhood defined by romantic canals, tiny shops and locals whizzing past on bicycles. Pulitzer Amsterdam is made up of interconnecting 17th-century canal houses but inside, the look is whimsical and modern. Book a family room (with a king and two twin beds, starting from \$530) or connecting rooms (suite with living room connected to classic room, \$924). Kids will love the personalized pillowcases topped with a bedtime story every night, swings in the interior garden and the chance to take a ride on the hotel's vintage teak canalboat.

More cookie-cutter but less expensive, the centrally located Marriott Amsterdam Hotel has family rooms (starting at \$350) that sleep four.

Hotel Estherea, another revamped 17th-century canal house, is a familyrun boutique hotel with family room and suites (from \$406, sleeps four).

Slovakia's capital makes striking comeback

ratislava, the capital of Slovakia and once a nearly desolate ghost town, is one of the big surprises of my recent travels. Its compact old town bursts with colorfully restored facades, lively outdoor cafes and swanky boutiques. Its ramshackle industrial quarter, just east of the center, is rapidly being redeveloped into a forest of skyscrapers. The hilltop castle gleams from a recent facelift. And even the glum communistera suburb of Petrzalka, right across the Danube, has undergone a Technicolor makeover. It's arguably the fastest-changing city in Europe.

Sitting quietly in the very center of central Europe, wedged between bigger and stronger nations (Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic and Polandy, Slovakia was brutally disfigured by its communist regime, then overshadowed by the Czechs. But in recent years, this fledgling republic has found its wings. Locals brag that the region around Bratislava has the hottest economy and highest per capita income of any region in the former Communist bloc.

Bratislava has also forged a twin-city alliance for trade and commerce with Vienna — which is less than an hour's train ride away — making this truly the nexus of central Europe.

Bratislava is a lively place particularly at night thanks in part to tens of thousands of university students.

Though lacking blockbuster sights, Bratislava is made for strolling. If you have just a few hours to spend, head straight to the old town and wander its mostly traffic-free streets, finishing with one or more of the city's fine viewpoints. Ascend to the observation deck atop a funky bridge or hike up to the castle for the views. With more time, stroll along the Danube riverbank to the thriving, modern Eurovea development — essentially a riverside park with luxury condos and a modern shopping mall. From the end of World War II until Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution in 1989, Bratislava was a damaged husk. The communist regime had no respect for the town's heritage, selling off the old town's medieval cobblestones to cute German towns rebuilding after the war. Locals avoided this stripped-down, desolate corner of the city,



Rick Steves

preferring to spend time in the Petrzalka suburb across the river. With the collapse of the

collapse of the communist regime, the new government began returning buildings to their original owners made the old town

and over time, the city made the old town traffic-free, spruced up public buildings and encouraged private owners to restore their buildings as well. In the past decade, life has returned, and Bratislava's oldtown charm is on full display.

Most visitors first encounter this charm via St. Michael's Gate, which is topped by the last surviving tower of the medieval city walls. It leads to the delightful Michalska Street, crammed with cafes and boutiques, and a symbol of how far the city has come. The town's modest main square, Hlavne Namestie, feels too petite for a national capital. Its style is a mishmash - every building around it seems to date from a different architectural period Elsewhere in the old town, you'll find the Old Market Hall, which dates back to 1910, and is now a busy community center that hosts concerts and a Saturday market. Laurinskaa Street is lined with fun-to-browse boutiques. And look out for the many whimsical statues that dot the old town. Most date from the late 1990s when city leaders wanted to entice locals



Rick Steves

Above: Bratislava's old town has come a long way since the Communist era. Below: The SNP Bridge's "UFO" restaurant provides stunning views.



Gretchen Strau

back into the newly prettied-up center. The imposing Bratislava Castle is the city's most prominent landmark. Hapsburg Empress Maria Theresa transformed the castle in the 18th century from a military fortress to a royal residence. It's dull up close, but has nice views.

Spanning the nearby river, just down-hill from the castle, is the huge flying-saucer-capped SNP Bridge, the communists' pride and joy. Locals aren't crazy about this structure — not only for its questionable Starship Enterprise design, but also because of the oppressive regime it represented. However, it's been reclaimed by capitalists, and the restaurant and observation deck have been renovated into a posh eatery called "UFO."

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Bastille Day in Paris

Those planning a trip to Paris this weekend will find their getaways happily bumping up against the grandiose celebrations marking the French national holiday.

Bastille Day, celebrated on July 14 each year, recalls the Storming of the Bastille in 1789, a precursor to the French Revolution. Cities and towns all across France mark the date with street parties and live music, but Paris really pulls out all the stops for it.

The fun begins the night before, when fire stations hosts their traditional "Bals des Pompiers," or firemen's balls. At some places, a set entry fee to these nights of music and dancing is charged, while at other places, a barrel for donations is left out.

On Bastille Day itself, the military parade along the Avenue des Champs-Elysees always attracts crowds several feet thick. Just after 10 a.m., the sound of trumpets and bugles signals the arrival of the president, and at 10:30 a.m., elite army units set forth to the beat of drums.

From 9:30 p.m., a classical music concert featuring the Orchestre Nationale de France takes place at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. At 11 p.m., a stun-



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

ning display of fireworks is shot off from the tower's framework itself; this dazzling show of pyrotechnics typically lasts around half an hour. Those joining the spectators in the Champs de Mars should be prepared for massive crowds, lots of walking and tight security. Online: tinyurl.com/y5bu718

Folk, jazz in Brussels

Music lovers of all ages will feel welcome at Brosella Folk and Jazz, a two-day festival set in the Groentheater, a leafy park near the Atomium in Brussels.

On July 13, seven folk acts will take to two stages. The wonderfully diverse program includes women's voices from Galicia and Italy, a wind orchestra from Romania and a trio featuring legendary harpist Edmar Castaneda, among several others.

July 14's program leans more toward jazz and features a couple fresh American acts in the mix, including a band made up of New Yorkers playing a funky and rock-tinged jazz, along with the trumpet player Marquis Hill.

On both days, a special zone is set up for children. Things to do there include playing games from a mobile library, taking part in creative workshops or hearing a swing jazz band that plays for young audiences.

Festival hours are 3 p.m.-10:45 p.m. on days, and entry is free. Online: brosellafestival.be/en

Samba Festival in Germany

In a setting where oompah music might be much more expected, the upbeat sounds of drums will fill the air as Coburg, Germany, hosts its annual Samba Festival, the biggest gathering of its kind outside of Brazil.

From July 12-14, around 200,000 visitors are expected to take part in a program made up of stage shows by well-known performers, concerts, DJs and



ABACA PRESS/TNS

The traditional military parade held along the Champs Elysees in Paris in celebration of Bastille Day is July 14.

dance competitions. The big event gets underway from 2 p.m. July 14, as a giant parade featuring some 3,000 "sambistas" makes its loud and merry way through the heart of the city.

Adult entry to the party premises costs 21 euros on July 12, 24 euros on July 13, and 14 euros

on July 14. Children ages 12 and under enter free. Online: sambafestival.de

Highland Games near Heidelberg

Scotland visits Germany in spirit, as the International Highland Games play out in Angelbachtal, a town about 20 miles south of Heidelberg.

For three days, a castle park sets the scene for music, sporting competitions, dance and more. Festivities kick off from 6 p.m. Friday night as "Paddy goes to Holyhead" plays its rocking version of Irish folk; entry is free. On Saturday, a pipe band opens festivities at 11 a.m., followed by team sports competitions. Sunday's program includes the individual heavy sports from 10:30 a.m.

Things to enjoy on both days include watching Irish step dancing or dogs giving sheep herding demonstrations, listening to live music and eating typically Scottish dishes. A "whisky flea market" offers members of the public to buy, sell or swap any bottles they might have on hand.

Entry costs 12 euros for adults and 6 euros for ages 6-14. Schlosspark Angelbachtal is just outside of Sinsheim. Online: highland-games.info

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Bar crawling in Bahrain

British friend Paul helps reporter explore pubs from seedy to 5-star

By Joshua Karsten Stars and Stripes

hh, Bahrain's bar scene — wait, they have bars in Bahrain? The answer is yes! And, as a former British protectorate, the vibe ranges from seedy British pubs to swank 5-star hotel bars. I've been meaning to explore some of the more established watering holes in the kingdom and embark on a British and Irish pub crawl. But since I do not have the appropriate qualifications, I've enlisted the help of "me mate" Paul, a cockney rhyming, retired British navy, Guinness drinking, salty, tattooed bloke and pub connoisseur with many years' experience traveling around the globe.

I'm calling it "pub crawl with Paul." No? A bit corny? Let's move on. Paul speaks English, but you may need a translator at times. First, we pulled out some "dib dobs" (Bahrain dinar, or BD) — a must, as it isn't cheap to drink in Bahrain. Average cost of a "wet" (pint) is around 3.5 BD

With only one night to "get it in," we narrowed our crawl to five popular British and Irish staples around town. I asked Paul to score each bar from a range of one (low) to five (high) across five categories: staff/service, ambiance, drinks, authenticity and seediness. Paul explained that seediness is not a bad thing and something he looks for in his pubs back home in the UK.

So, after a long night of research, here you have it, Bahrain's top five British and Irish pubs, according to Paul.





PHOTOS BY JOSHUA KARSTEN/Stars and Stripes

Right: A pint of Guinness is poured at JJ's Irish Pub in Adliya, Bahrain. JJ's scored high ratings from British pub fan Paul Phillips, left, for service, ambiance and drinks.



Phillips at the Guinness Lounge, a pub in Amwaj Islands, Bahrain. The Guinness Lounge offers shisha pipes along with booze, and TVs were plentiful.

1. JJ's Irish Pub (Adliya)

Overall score: 3.6
"Busy, really busy," Paul found
on a Monday. It was karaoke
night, which tends to draw a
crowd.

JJ's has been around since 1999 — one of the original gangsters of Bahrain — and is a popular pub for both locals and expats. We even ran across an actual Irish person at this pub, though unfortunately he was singing "Barbie Girl" on stage.

The bar wraps around a large dining area and dance floor, and Irish memorabilia and trinkets are found throughout.

Paul gave JJ's extra points for service, ambiance and drinks but an average score for authenticity and seediness.

"I liked it because it was packed, a lot of people enjoying themselves, drinking, singing, joining in," Paul said.

As popular as JJ's was for a Monday night karaoke special, Paul marked JJ's down for authenticity.

"I thought a lot of the Irish promorabilia was quite tacky," Paul recalled. "A lot of shamrocks hanging from the ceiling and a big Irish flag with a great big leprechaun on it. You don't really get that back home in Ireland — a bit overdone."

Paul still ranked JJ's pub the highest for its happy vibe and popularity among locals.

2. Wembley Sports Bar (Juffair)

Overall score: 3.4

"Apart from the fact that it's got a great cool name, Wembley, the home of British football, I guita liked it." Paul said

quite liked it." Paul said.

Many English pubs are changing from small village bars with oak beams to the more modern vibe you see in Bahrain. Wembley, a Premier Hotel bar in the heart of Juffair, opened in 2016 and has already earned a title as "local"s pub" for many Juffairians. The darts boards were in the corner, the autographed English football jerseys hung on the wall and patrons seemed to be enjoying themselves.

be enjoying tnemserves.
Paul gave the staff a five for service as we were served immediately and with a smile. With fours for ambiance and drinks, this bar was a contender for the top spot. However, Paul was less thrilled about the bar's level of seediness, as it was just too clean and new. which others may like.

"I wouldn't say it was seedy at all," Paul begrudged. "I'd give it a low ranking; quite clean."

Despite Paul's craving for a sticky floor and dirty curtains, Wembley offers a full English breakfast, fish and chips and all the other English favorites. There's even a popular brunch every Friday afternoon for 21 BD, with unlimited drinks.

3. Fiddlers Green (Diplomatic Area)

Overall score: 3.2
This might come as a surprise to Bahrain expats, but there's a nice pub in the heart of the otherwise dead Diplomatic Area of Manama

Fiddlers Green is tucked away next to the lobby of the Radisson Blu hotel, a swank marblefloored behemoth. Unless you are a hotel guest, this bar is not on the normal pub crawl trails found in Adliya or Juffair. But, it's worth a look for your next outing or football match.

"They've not done a bad job making it look like an old place," Paul said as a compliment.

The ceilings were even painted a yellowish brown to resemble years of smoke stains. The large "oak" beams ran the length of the pub.

"It depends on what you're after," Paul described. "If it were a village pub, it would be nice because it was quiet."

Just a handful of folks were drinking their pints in this establishment. It's great for a "chin wag" (chit chat), according to Paul.



Phillips soaks in Fiddlers Green.

4. McGettigan's (Adliya) Overall score: 3

Some folks call this place "McGreen's," either due to the green neon lights or just because McGettigan's is harder to say. This bar is brand spanking new and apart from the green lights, there is absolutely nothing Irish about this place. But it is a classy place for a few "scoops" (pints), according to Paul.

McGettigan's is a chain and can be found in 20 locations in the Middle East, Asia, Ireland and one in NYC.

Paul applauded "McGreen's" for service and the amazing vibe. There's stadium seating outside to watch a game. There's a stage and a live band.

Paul gave outstanding scores across the board until it came to authenticity and seediness.

"There was no Irish or British vibe at all, but I really liked it as just a bar," Paul explained. "For seediness ... a very clean and nice place."

McGettigan's has an extensive food and drinks menu and offers a Friday brunch from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.



Guinness Lounge (Amwaj)

Overall score: 2.8

The last on our list is a nice Guinness pub way out in Amwaj. With just a handful of bars out that way, options are limited for residents and visitors. But the Guinness Lounge is the only one that offers booze and shisha pipes, a nice touch when watching "the footie" (soccer game).

Part of the Gulf Suites Hotel, this squeaky-clean lounge opened in 2018 and is a closer alternative than Juffair and Adliya for the 10,000 plus residents living on these artificial islands.

The staff and service were friendly, the ambiance was average, the decor was unremarkable, the music was on a loop and its cleanliness was not on par with a seedy Irish pub. But Paul enjoyed himself, noting the massive TV screens all over. "Struck me as a sports bar more than an Irish pub." Paul said.

A main takeaway for Paul during his night on the town was the limited drink selections. If you don't like lagers or Guinness, your only other options are spirits. In England, cask ales, bitters, ciders and other drinks are quite popular. The pubs in Bahrain are more international in that sense.

"We also saw the AI Fateh Mosque, Bahrain National Museum, International Circuit and some souk shops. It wasn't all just boozing," Paul said at the end of the crawl.

karsten.joshua@stripes.com Twitter: @ioshua karsten

An exceptional beauty

Nature lovers will enjoy the stunning lakes and waterfalls of Plitvice Lakes National Park

By Norman Llamas Stars and Strings

ince we arrived in Italy and heard about Plitvice Lakes National Park in Croatia, my family and I have been planning to visit there.

Finally, we did it. Located around 200 miles east of Aviano Air Base, the park, commonly referred to as the "Land of the Falling Lakes," is the oldest and largest national park in Croatia. As soon as you enter, you are struck by how green and mountainous it.

There are numerous activities available for visitors, including lake tour programs, mountain climbing, skiing, sledding and biking, but the majority of visitors go to Plitvice to tour the lakes and waterfalls.

The lake system was formed over thousands of years by water flowing over limestone and chalk, depositing travertine barriers that created natural dams. Sixteen named lakes and several smaller, unnamed ones cascade onto each other. Plitvice was added to the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites in 1979.

The first 12 lakes, called the upper lakes, were formed from impermeable dolomite rock. The larger lakes in the system, they have more indented and gentler shores than the other four, called the lower lakes.

The lower lakes were formed from permeable limestone substrate, and cut into a deep canyon with steep cliffs.

The lakes end in an impressive display of waterfalls, at the base of which the Korana River has its

A range of climates and different altitudes in the park allow a



PHOTOS BY NORMAN LIAMAS/Stars and Stripes

An upper lake surrounded by waterfalls is seen in Plitvice Lakes National Park in Croatia. The mountainous park, which is about 200 miles east of Aviano Air Base in Italy, offers visitors eight different routes to tour the lake system.

variety of plants to thrive there, from beech, spruce and fir trees to a mixture of Alpine and Mediterranean vegetation. The area is also home to a variety of animal and bird species including the European brown bear, wolf, eagle, owl, lynx, wildcat and a large woodland grouse called the canercaillie. You can choose from eight routes around the lakes, labeled by letter and color-coded, based on which entrance the path passes. A complete circuit through the park can be done on trail K, which can be accessed through either the park's north or south entrance. A little more than 11 miles long, trail K takes about six to eight hours to complete.

My family and I decided to take trail C, which takes four to six hours. The path, which was very well maintained, consisted of wooden planks, gravel, rocks and, in some areas, steps. Parts of the trail were wheelchair accessible but there are sections with steps and steep inclines. The park notes on its website that "trails through the lake zone are not fully adapted for the disabled."

The views were spectacular. Some trails have boat or bus transfers — fee included in the price of the park entrance ticket — to save you time walking. Make sure you hold onto your entrance ticket because they stamp it at the boat interchanges.

The trails and bridges are narrow, sometimes technical, and when pedestrian traffic is heavy, such as around midday when the park becomes more crowded, it can make you a little nervous. I found myself clutching my son's hand very tightly on parts of the

Also important to note: Swimming isn't allowed anywhere in the park. Cycling is allowed only in designated areas.

In grassland parts of the park, there are rest areas with bathrooms and places to grab a bite to eat and something to drink.

If you choose to spend several days in Plitvice, the park has three hotels clustered near entrance two, the south entrance; the Camp Korana campsite, with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



Visitors ride an electric boat across one of the park's picturesque lakes. Boat rides, which can considerably cut down on the time it takes to hike around the park, are included in the price of entry tickets.



Boaters take in the view of one of the waterfalls at Plitvice Lakes National Park. The park, an area of exceptional biological and geological diversity, is visited by more than one million people annually.

FROM PAGE 30

bungalows and space for up to 500 camping units, about four miles from entrance one, also called the north entrance; and another campsite, Camp Borje, about nine miles away from entrance two. There are numerous options for private accommodation outside the park.
If you go, make sure to bring

passports, which you will need to enter Croatia. It's a good idea to change some dollars or euros into Croatian kuna before you get to Croatia, too, While most Croatian establishments accept credit cards, they might not accept

euros if you're paying in cash. If possible, buy tickets prior to arriving at the park to avoid disappointment if they are sold out at the entrances. When you buy tickets, you'll be asked to choose the date and time of your visit, and whether you want to go in through the north or south entrance. It's advisable to choose an early-morning entry to avoid the throngs of visitors and tour groups that seem to arrive around midday.

But no matter when you choose to visit, you will more than likely leave amazed and looking forward to going back. At least, that's how we felt.

llamas.norman@stripes.com

KNOW & GO

DIRECTIONS

Address: Josipa Jovica 19, 53231, Plitvice Lakes, Croatia

TIMES

7 a.m.- 8 p.m. daily

COSTS

From June 1 to September 30, one adult can expect to pay up to 250 Croatian Kuna (about 36 euros) per day. Children 7-18 are about half the price of an adult ticket, and there are discounts for students and kids under 7. Disabled people enter for free. There's also a discounted two-day ticket option, and, if you're staying at one of the hotels near the park. the reception desk can

extend one-day tickets.

Full restaurants are available at the entrances and exits to the park. Food options at restaurants in the middle of the park range from quick snacks to ice cream to sit-down restaurants where you can order grilled chicken, ribs, steaks, cheeseburgers and sausages

INFORMATION

Phones: +385 (0) 53 751 014; +385 (0) 53 751 015; e-mail: info@np-plitvickajezera.hr.

Online: np-plitvicka-jezera.

- Norman Llamas

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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific



A little slice of paradise

Okinawa's Minnajima, or Croissant Island, a quick, satisfying getaway

By Aya Ichihashi Stars and Stripes

Pнотоs ву Ауа Існінаsні/Stars and Stripes

awaii is probably the most iconic and popular vacation destination for people around the world. And yet, I was not surprised to hear that Okinawa welcomed more tourists than Hawaii for the first time in 2017, according to Japan's Nikke inews service.

No doubt the countless beautiful beaches around Okinawa are the biggest attraction for many visitors.

Minnajima, with its beautiful white-sand beach and an ocean layered in greens and blues, is one of my favorite islands to visit.

Minnajima is about a 15-minute ferry ride from Toguchi Port in Motobu town. The island is very small, about 3 miles in circumference, and shaped like a crescent moon, earning it the nickname Croissant Island.

The island's population is around 50, and there are no convenience stores or ATMs there, so bring enough cash and snacks/ drinks before heading over.

Due to the island's popularity, seats on the ferry sometimes sell out in the summer, so be flexible with your schedule as you might have to catch a later ferry.

Tickets may be purchased at the ticketing counter from 8 a.m. at Toguchi Port; reservations are not available. I usually try to catch the 10 a.m. high-speed ferry, and I've never had an issue. It departs every 45 minutes distribute person (UR 20 to Aug 21)

during the high season (July 20 to Aug. 31). As the ferry approaches the Minna port, I am astonished by the beautiful view. There is a designated swimming area on the right side of the port with lifeguards and jellyfish nets. It is a very family-friendly beach. I usually walk to the other side of the beach

for more privacy. However, I do not recommend snorkeling there because of the Jet Skis, and they are usually towing banana boats in the area. If you would like to swim farther than the

designated swimming area, a snorkeling tour is available for about \$50. You can sign up at rental shops near the beach area. What I love about Minna Island is the

what I love about Minna Island is the snow-white, powdery sand. It might surprise people that most of Okinawa's beaches are a beige-orange color, but the sand on Minna reminds me of Caribbean or Maldives resort beaches and their crystal-clear water.

After a splash on the beach, I usually walk around the tiny island; but be mindful of the residents. Walking around in bathing suits is frowned upon in the neighborhood, so cover yourself with T-shirts and shorts.

Walking up the hilly main street from the port, you can find a food stand, Tida, that of fers curry rice (600 yen), Okinawa soba (600 yen), taco rice (600 yen) and shaved ice (200 yen) to refuel before hitting the water once again.

At the end of the road lies a nameless, horseshoe-shaped beach. Usually, not many people are there, and some trees provide good shade. You can bring a book and beach towel to relax and listen to the waves for a few hours.

Minnajima is definitely great place to visit when you want to go somewhere — but not too far.

ichihashi.aya@stripes.com



A jet skier skims the water while towing people on a float just off Minnajima, Okinawa.

A 15-minute ferry ride from Toguchi Port, 29-92, Tancha, Motobu, Kunigami-Gun, Okinawa Japan 905-0213. GPS coordinates: 26.6586567, 127.89027599999997

TIMES

The island is open yearround; however, shops and eateries may not be available during winter.

COSTS

Ferry fare (round trip): 1,710 yen for adults, 860 yen for children younger than 12. Toguchi Port offers free parking.

FOOD

There is no restaurant, but a snack food stand and tiny information center sells a limited selection of drinks and snacks. They close during the winter season.

INFORMATION

The ferry schedule varies depending on the season. The first ferry takes off at 8:30 a.m. from Toguchi Port to Minnajima throughout the year, except July 1-19, and the last ferry departs from Minna to Toguchi at 5 p.m. Online: www7b.biglobe. ne.jp/~minna Tips: Bring a canopy umbrella, a small camping tent or a pop-up tent for shade. Pack some snacks and sandwiches

— Aya Ichihashi

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

After Hours: Okinawa

Ву Ауа Існінаяні Stars and Stripes

rowing up, how many of us were told by our mothers or grandmothers that breakfast is the most important meal of the day?

Yet, we chose to sleep in until the last second, skipped countless breakfasts to catch the school bus and later at school ended up buying a chocolate bar

in the hallway. That was me. Fast-forward through college and a decade living a "mature" adult life and suddenly I found myself missing the delicious breakfast that for years I took for granted.

Located in Onna Village, a popular resort area of Okinawa, Kaiholo Cafe welcomes hungry customers with the amazing smell of buttery pancakes and a fresh cup of coffee. Top the promising aroma from the kitchen with a greeting from a dachshund in a cute hula skirt and a lei, and you know you've come to the right cafe.

The interior is decorated with surfboards, hula girl decorations, hibiscus, pineapples and flower leis giving an instantly relax-ing, laid-back Hawaiian vibe. Kaiholo Cafe was opened in 2013 by Mizuki Kusa; she also owns a hula studio downstairs.

If learning to hula dance has been on your bucket list, this is your chance to enjoy a delicious breakfast and learn the hula. There is a keiki, or kids, hula class for little ones.

I was once torn between ordering eggs Benedict (900 ven or about \$8) and the Belgian-style waffle (600 yen or \$5.50) because legit Belgian-style waffles and eggs Benedict can be hard to find on Okinawa.

I found a clever solution by ordering both and sharing the waffle with my companion or simply bringing the leftovers home for the next morning. For an additional 200 yen, Hawaiian iced coffee is available to order, as well as tea, orange juice, sodas and hot coffee Americano.

For a change, I decided to try the bacon-egg-chili muffin (900 yen) and plain waffle. My companion ordered the eggs Benedict as usual

In the past, I had ordered the acai bowl (800 ven); special



find on Okinawa, but Kaiholo





The Bacon Egg Chili Muffin with a side of fried potatoes is a tasty departure from the ordinary.

breakfast plate (800 yen), which comes with egg, potato, meat. drink and a choice of pancake or toast or waffle (additional 200 yen); or cheese omelet plate (800 yen) with waffle. But I always came back to the eggs Benedict and the waffle.

Eggs Benedict is a popular breakfast dish in the States that is usually served over halves of an English muffin, topped with crispy bacon or ham, a poached egg and smothered with Hollandaise sauce. There are many variations out there. I would say Kaiholo Cafe is leaning toward the traditional style.

My companion and I were ready when Ms. Mizuki brought our orders to the table. I hadn't tried her homemade chili before so I was a tad nervous about



PHOTOS BY AYA ICHIHASHI/Stars and Stripes

Kaiholo Cafe in Onna Village, Okinawa, offers customers a chance to relax, Hawaiian style.

KAIHOLO

Location: 6978-1 Onna. Onna Village Kunigar Gun, Okinawa 904-0411 Hours: Open daily, except for Fridays, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (last order at 4 p.m.) Dress: Casual Prices: Most items cost less than 1,000 yen. Information: 098-955-259: www.kaiholocafe.com; www.facebook.com/ KaiholoCafe

Aya Ichihashi

ordering this dish but to my sur prise, it was delightful. The chili-bacon-fried egg was a perfect combination. I would definitely order this dish again.

My companion offered one of her eggs Benedict pieces, so we each swapped one and tasted both. The eggs Benedict was delicious as usual. The sausage patty gives just the right saltiness to the dish.

As we were finishing our first plates of food, our waffle arrived, golden and crispy. Kaiholo offers the Belgian-style waffle with the deeper pockets that you can fill with butter, syrup or whipped cream, and it's crispy outside and chewy inside.

We finished the waffle in no



Lots of Hawaiian doo-dads greet customers at Kaiholo Cafe.

time and washed it down with iced coffee. Hana, the hula dachshund, visited us a few times, but she did not beg for food. She has serious food allergies, so please don't feed her.

Not a morning person? No worries; they serve breakfast throughout the day, so even if you sleep in, you can still have waffles for brunch.

ichihashi.aya@stripes.com

Find out the best installations in the Pacific, chosen by your fellow Stars and Stripes readers!





Available inside July 19 Stars and Stripes newspaper (Pacific Theater only)

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Weekend: travel

NIGHT AT THE POSEUM

Playful exhibition pairs Japan's kawaii culture with its love of 'unko'

> By JAE C. Hong Associated Press

apan's culture of kawaii — or cute — makes no exceptions for poop. It gets a pop twist at the Unko Museum in Yokohama near Tokyo.

Here, the poop is artificial, nothing like what would be in a toilet, and comes in twisty ice cream and cupcake shapes, in all colors and sizes.

"The poops are colorful and come out nicely in photos," said Haruka Okubo, a student visiting part of the museum devoted to all-important selfies. "The shape is so round and cute"

In Japan, little poop-shaped erasers with faces and other small items have long been popular items collected by children, and sometimes older folks. As elsewhere, scatological jokes are

popular and bodily functions discussed openly: a recent morning variety show by public broadcaster NHK featured

caster NHK featured tips on how to deal with farts.

Visitors to the museum get a short video

introduction and then are asked to sit on one of seven colorful, non-functional toilets lined up against the wall.

Music plays as a user pretends to poop, then a brightly colored souvenir "poop" can be collected

from inside the toilet bowl, to be taken home after the tour.

A ceiling-high poop sculpture in the main hall erupts every 30 minutes, spitting out little foam

The "Unstagenic" area of Instagram-worthy installations includes pastel-hued flying poops and a neon sign with the word "poop" written in different languages.

In another room, players use a projection-mapping game like "whack-a-mole" to stamp on and squash the most poops they can. In another game, participants compete to make the biggest "poop" by shouting the word in Japanese, "unko," as loudly as possible. A soccer yideo game involves using a controller to

"kick" a poop into a goal.

Toshifumi Okuya, a system engineer, was amused to see adults having fun. "It's funny because there are adults running around screaming 'poop, poop," be said

At the end of the tour, visitors get a bag to carry home their souvenir poop. If they want still more, the museum's gift shop abounds with more poop-themed souvenirs.

The museum attracted more than 100,000 visitors in the first month after its opening in March. It will remain open until September.

Large poop-shaped figurines — shaped like soft ice cream, or cupcake toppings — are seen at the Unko Museum in Yokohama, south of Tokyo. In a country known for its cult of cute, even poop is not an exception. A pop-up exhibition in the port city of Yokohama is all about unko, a Japanese word for poop.







WEEKEND: TRAVEL

'Don't panic'

What to do when you lose your passport overseas

By NATALIE B. COMPTON The Washington Post

assport problems can elicit very real physical responses in travelers. On a blazing afternoon in Jakarta a few years ago, I realized I didn't

keep your passport in a hotel safe. Know where the nearest U.S. Embassy is. Travel with physical and digital copies of your passport.

Never leave your passport in unattended

know your situation. Check the time before you head in to solve your travel nightmare; many embassies and consulates can't issue emergency passports after-hours or on the weekend.

Once you're in, report your missing passport to the consular section.

"Make sure that you have the documents you need to apply for the new passport," Bernier-Toth says. "When you come in, [if] you're fully prepared, we can take care of you as quickly as possible."

Make sure that your passport is gone forever before you begin the process — officials are going to cancel your existing passport over the phone, and it will be unusable if you do find it.

Travel writer Ali Wunderman had her passport and a copy in the same bag when she was traveling through Europe as a teenager.

"I was in an almost-empty train station in Barcelona, a simple layover between Valencia and Interlaken (in Switzerland), when the bag with my passport, wallet and unsent postcards got nabbed from right under my nose," Wunderman says. "I was 19 and naive enough to think the Australian girl — the only other person in the train station - would watch my bags instead of taking them, but here we are.

After an unsuccessful plea to local police for help, Wunderman went to the American consulate with her now-husband, who could vouch for her identity. Her parents did the same over the phone. "Even though it sucked at the time, I learned a lot

about being vigilant while traveling, as well as how to be resourceful when it seems like everything has fallen apart," Wunderman says. "You have to be calm, ask for help and, most importantly, learn how to avoid that situation in the future." her passport, along with a digital version saved on her



·STARS AND STRIPES· Friday, July 12, 2019

WEEKEND: MUSIC



SONGS THAT SUM UP

Ariana Grande

- FROM TRAUMA TO TRIUMPH

By Jon Bream Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

n February, she became the only artist other than the Beatles to occupy the top three spots on Billboard's Hot 100. In April, she was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time magazine — for the second time. And she's the second-most-followed woman on Instagram (after Selena Gomez).

But what's most impressive about Ariana Grande is how she turns personal pain into potent pop. The 2017 tragedy after her concert in Manchester, England, when a terrorist's bomb killed 22 fans. The September 2018 overdose England, when a terrorist's count anned 22 lails. The September 2010 overdose death of her former boyfriend, rapper Mac Miller. Her public breakup in October 2018 with fiance Pete Davidson of "Saturday Night Live."

Grande's last two albums, "Sweetener" and "Thank U, Next" — released six months apart, an unheard-of schedule in today's music world — are master-

works of pop as well as chart-toppers ("Thank U" is the No. 1 seller of 2019). Below, we look at how the 26-year-old ponytailed powerhouse addressed her

'NO TEARS LEFT TO CRY' (2018)

life in seven recent songs.

Key lyric: "Right now, I'm in a state of mind, I wanna be in, like, all the time. Ain't got no tears left to cry. So I'm pickin' it up, pickin' it up (oh

Real life: Grande had a lot to process in 2017, with the terrorist attack at her Manchester show in May and then a benefit/memorial concert there two weeks later. This was her way of coping, acknowledging and moving on. The haunting, disco-y tune, dropped in April 2018 as the preview single for her summer album 'Sweetener," reached No. 3.

'GET WELL SOON' (2018)

Key lyric: "When you need someone to pull you out the bubble, I'll be right there just to hug you, I'll be there. Where are you? Are you home? Call me right on the phone. I'll be there, yeah, I'll be there. I don't care who is gone, you shouldn't be alone. I'll be there, there."

Real life: Was this a message

for Miller with his drug problems, Davidson with his mental illness, the families of victims of the Manchester concert or just a generic salvo for all those close to Grande? In any case, this musical hug, as she calls it, is more powerful than 365 Hallmark get-well cards.

'BREATHIN'' (2018)

Key lyric: "Feel my blood run-nin', swear the sky's fallin', I keep on breathin'. Time goes by and I can't control my mind. I keep on breathin', mmm, yeah."

Real life: This song on "Sweetener" ends with several seconds of recorded silence. In a tweet, Grande explained that after the Manchester bombing, she suffered from major anxiety for about three months and experienced trouble breathing. She tweeted: "lots of voices in my head singin."

'IMAGINE' (2019)

Key lyric: "Stayin' up all night, order me pad thai. Then we gon' sleep 'til noon. Me with no makeup, you in the bathtub. Bubbles and bubbly, ooh. This is a pleasure, feel like we never, act this regular."

Real life: It's an ode to Miller, a dreamy piece imagining how their life together could be if things had been normal.

'GHOSTIN'' (2019)

Key lyric: "I know that it breaks your heart when I cry again. 'Stead of ghostin' him.'

Real life: After Miller died, she missed him terribly and felt bad that her still-strong feelings for him hurt her then-fiance Davidson

'THANK U, NEXT' (2019)

Key lyric: "Thought I'd end up with Sean. But he wasn't a match. Wrote some songs about Ricky. Now I listen and laugh. Even almost got married, and for Pete I'm so thankful. Wish I could say 'thank you' to Malcolm. 'Cause he was an angel."

Real life: Unlike the cagey Taylor Swift, Grande names names in this No. 1 song about her former boyfriends - rapper Big Sean, dancer Ricky Alvarez plus Davidson and Miller. Singing "I'm so [bleeping] grateful for my ex," she asserts that she's ready to make her herself better, but appreciates what her exes meant

'7 RINGS' (2019)

Key lyric: "Wearing a ring, but ain't gon' be no 'Mrs.' Bought matching diamonds for six of my bitches. I'd rather spoil all my friends with my

Real life: Sampling "My Favorite Things" from "The Sound of Music," Grande boasts like a rapper about how she bought seven diamond rings at Tiffany — one for herself, the rest for her besties. Friendship trumps all, she seems to say. Fans apparently agreed, sending this song to No. 1.

WEEKEND: MUSIC



By RANDALL ROBERTS

Los Angeles Times

he British Invasion gets all the inik, but in 1964, as the Beatles were upending pop culture, a record by a jazz hitmaker and a Brazilian bossa nova innovator stormed the Grammy Awards and the American charts.

Called "Getz/Gilberto" and featuring the breakout hit "The Girl from Ipanema;" the collaborative effort won the album of the year trophy and turned saxophonist Stan Getz and Joao Gilberto, the intensely private Brazilian singer-guitarist, into an unlikely hitmaking duo.

Gilberto's death at age 88 was announced July 6 through the Facebook page of the musician's son, Joao Marcelo Gilberto. The son offered no details on Gilberto's death.

During a seven-decade career, the guitarist's quick, liquid acoustic chords hit with a smooth but percussive energy, and coupled with his subtly expressive voice, transformed the music of his country and helped spread the sound across the world.

One of the most influential musicians of the 20th century, Gilberto and his peer and collaborator Antonio Carlos Jobim helped create and popularize bossa nova, a toneddown and romanticized take on Brazilian samba music.

"He could read a newspaper and sound good," Miles Davis once said of Gilberto's

As much a feeling as a set of musical rules, fülberto's aesthetic has resonated in the work of artists including Caetano Veloso, Sade, Gal Costa, Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell, Stereolab, Seu Jorge and pretty much every Brazilian songwriter since 1960. Gilberto's daughter Bebel has been a guiding force in carrying bossa nova into a new electronic

"I owe Joao Gilberto everything I am today," fellow Brazilian Veloso has said. "Even if I were something else and not a musician, I would say that I owe him everything."

If it's true that some cultures are just better at making music, Brazil's reputation was solidified when Gilberto and Jobim, both then based in Rio de Janeiro, joined forces in the late 1950s. Born 1,200 miles north in the province of Bahia, Gilberto was first drawn to the guitar at age 15.

Preternaturally artistic, he drew the concern of his parents at an early age. One story described the son during a mental evaluation "Gilberto looked out of the window and noted the wind tearing out the trees hair." Told by the psychologist that 'trees don't have hair, Gilberto replied, 'And some people have no poetry in their souls." according to a 2003 story in The Los Angeles Times.

In 1958, Gilberto recorded "Chega de Saudade," a mesmerizing Jobim-penned crooner. Never much of a songwriter him-self, Gilberto, then in his late 20s, regularly tapped Jobim's work. That symbiotic musical relationship defined a movement, and along the way, bossa nova integrated itself into the global conversation in much the same way rock 'n' roll did.

The difference? Where Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley upped the tempo, attitude and energy, Gilberto and Jobim soothed and seduced their way onto dance floors.

When the late Brazilian guitarist Oscar Castro-Neves heard his first Gilberto record, he recalled to The Times that he was astonished, comparing it to the first time he heard trumpeter Charlie Parker.

"It changed everything, for every young musician in Brazil. Once we heard what Joao "He could read a newspaper and sound good," Miles Davis once said of Gilberto's tone. was doing with the guitar and the voice, we all had to find a way to figure out how he did it," Castro-Neves told writer Don Heckman.

Rather than building Carmen Mirandaesque samba wildfires of big beat percussion to propel loud, expressive singers, Gilberto lighted a few candles and channeled the breathy tones of Chet Baker, Miles Davis and Frank Sinatra, as well as successful Brazilian singers Lucio Alves and Dick Farney, His success earned him a U.S. deal with Capitol Records in 1960.

Samba and bossa nova had already worked its way into American jazz by then, mostly through the efforts of musicians Getz, Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Byrd.

By the end of 1962, bossa nova had been cited by Life magazine as "fast becoming a U.S. rage." Gilberto, Jobim and other Brazilian musicians had been invited to the White House by Jackie Kennedy, and Presley had recorded the rollicking "Bossa Nova Baby: In Los Angeles, "exotica" bandleader Martin Denny tapped the rhythm for "Quiet Village Bossa Nova." Music mogul and A&M Records founder Herb Alpert harnessed the Getz/Gilberto-inspired trend by signing Servio Mendes.

"The Girl from Ipanema" was something different: a beguiling pop song wrapped inside a cool jazz number. Sung by Gilberto's then-wife, Astrud, the song marvels on the titular girl as she strolls along the beach. "When she walks, she's like a samba / That swings so cool and sways so gentle."

That cool and gentle swing was "Getz/ Gilberto's" calling card. Featuring Jobim adding sparse counter melodies and accents on piano and Gilberto's longtime drummer Milton Banana tapping out barely audible cymbal and tom-tom patterns, its eight songs defined a universe.

Weekend: Books

Beach bag picks

9 thrillers that will captivate readers this summer

By RICHARD LIPEZ ■ Special to The Washington Post

ummer, that most carefree of seasons, is also a time when readers are, paradoxically, drawn to reading about murder, violence, deception and other unsavory acts. Mysteries and thrillers rank among the most popular genres for beach-time reading. Who's to say why' Publishers, rising to the demand, have provided us with a plethora of titles to choose from. Here are nine of this summer's best options.

It's notable that two play to many people's worst fear (having a child kidnapped) and one is about what might be our second- or third-worst fear (noisy neighbors). Rotten cops take their lumps, too, as do a noisome stew of international troublemakers. This is by no means a complete list — see also Denies Mina's "Conviction" and Louise Penny's "A Better Man," among others — but there are only so many books one can fit into a beach baz. Entiov.

'Beyond All Reasonable Doubt'

Malin Persson Giolito

(Translated from Swedish by Rachel Willson-Broyles)

Author of the 2017 prizewinning "Quicksand," Giolito has come up with another knockout legal thriller. Here Sweden looks less like a socialist paradise and more like a society as screwed up as anyplace else. Bumbling cops and prosecutors convict a medical researcher for the grisly murder of a 15-year-old girl he had seduced. In the public's opinion, Stig Ahlin is "Professor Death." So when lawyer Sophia Weber looks at the paltry evidence and agrees to help the imprisoned professor petition for a new trial, the reaction, online and among friends, is ferociously negative. Weber is a wonderfully textured creation, a poignant mix of determined braininess and nagging doubts. Giolito's finale is a smidgen more ambiguous than some readers will want, but maybe this means Sophia Weber will be back again — a very good thing.

'Big Sky'

KATE ATKINSON BIG SKY Fans of Atkinson's Jackson Brodie PI series won't be disappointed with the Yorkshire ex-cop's return in "Big Sky." The novel is brimming with the wit and let-justice-triumph tenacity that led the series to print best-sellerdom and a popular BBC-TV series. All these years later, Brodie can't quite remember why he quit the force in the first place. But his investigative skills are as at-the-ready as at-the-ready as

his moral outrage. A chance encounter at an amusement park Brodie visits with his 13-year-old son pulls him in to exposing a grotesque international sex-trafficking ring. There isn't a character here who doesn't sashay resplendently off the page. That includes Brodie's sometime girlfriend, Julia, who is given to pronouncements like: "The class war's over. Everyone lost." With Atkinson, it's Raymond Chandler meets Jane Austen, and amazingly she makes it all work.

'The Black Jersey'

Jorge Zepeda Patterson (Translated from Spanish by Achy Obejas)

Although the amateur bicyclists I know are generally nice people, the professionals depicted in this thriller about murder and mayhem at the Tour de France are anything but. "Cycling is battle; cycling is combat," French racing whiz Marc Moreau explains to a police inspector looking into a series of beatings, poisonings and other attacks against participants in the world's most famous bike race Recruited to help the cops find the saboteurs, Moreau is not surprised to learn that among the suspects are several racers themselves. They "literally risked their lives in dizzying, nearly suicidal descents," Moreau muses. So why "wouldn't they be willing to kill?" Among the win-at-any-cost egomaniacs and hyper-patriots is a French coach who "was the kind of guy who, if you saw him with

red eyes at a funeral, it was only because he was allergic to flowers." Does Patterson's shocker of a denouement inspire hope for the future of professional bike racing? Hardly.

'The Chain'

Adrian McKinty



This feverish thriller about child kidnappings is one of those pop novels that keeps you snickering over how preposterous it all is, and yet you can't put the thing down. Two sociopaths, a brother and sister, set up a horrifying "well-oiled machine" in which the desperate parents of abducted youngsters must not only pay ransom via the dark web, they must also kidnap somebody else's

child, who will then be ransomed after yet another kid is grabbed and hidden away. And on and on. It's the "Uber of kidnapping with the clients all doing most of the work themselves." Implausibly, the ghastly "chain" goes unbroken for many years until insecure but spunky divorcee Rachel Klein joins her heroin-addicted brother-in-law Pete to track down and obliterate the greedy sadists who run the operation. The wild shootout finale is the type of scene that — if this were a movie — would have audience members in the adjoining theater wondering what all the racket was about. Paramount has acquired film rights to "The Chain."

'The New Girl'

Daniel Silva



In this absorbing exercise in literary chutzpah, Silva brings his Israeli spymaster Gabriel Allon back again for more bloodletting and realpolitik chicanery on behalf of Israel and the Western Alliance. In an author's note, Silva says he wrote this one in 3½ months, and it almost feels as if he had one eye on cable news as he typed at high speed. That's how up-to-the-minute this

turbulent tale is about a coldblooded Saudi prince plainly based on Mohammed bin Salman. The 12-year-old daughter of Khalid bin Mohammed, as he's called here, is kidnapped and held for ransom, the demanded payoff being not money but the prince's abdication. The plotters also want Allon involved in the rescue so they can kill him. The novel is jam-packed with both historical background and breaking news. Among the suspects in the abduction are Iran, Oatar, Saudi jihadists and an additional assortment of Saudi royals, among others. Allon, however, eventually figures out that it's another malign "foreign power" pulling levers from outside the region, and anybody who reads a daily newspaper will see what's really going on even before Allon does.

'The Bitterroots'

C.J. Box

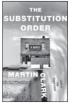
You suspect right away that the Montana forest fire on the first page of C.J Box's fourth Cassie Dewell mystery isn't just there for the atmospherics. It turns out, though, that the frightening blaze is not the novel's Chekhovian gun. That role unexpectedly goes to ex-cop-now-PI Dewell's 14-year-old son, Ben, who is in the throes of his first teen crush. Sweet, sulky Ben is the center of Dewell's life - her soldier husband Jim died in Afghanistan - and it's rough on both Ben and his mom when she leaves Bozeman Mont to investi-



gate what looks like a phony sexual assault charge in a county known to be controlled by a ruthless ranching family. Dewell barely survives the brutal Kleinsasser clan, but she gets help from a feminist law firm, a compromised cop with a conscience and an abused ranch employee out for revenge. Likable, camy, persistent, messy-haired and slightly dumpy Dewell is also fortified — bless her heart — by Hostess chocolate-covered douehnuts.

'The Substitution Order'

Martin Clar



The prize-winning Clark, a 59-year-old Virginia retired judge, has been compared to Carl Hiasaen and Nick Hornby. I would add "Better Call Saul," with its satisfying blend of satire and humanity. Clark's appealingly imperfect hero, Kevin Moore, is less of a mess than Saul Goodman but just as unlucky. A brief and uncharacteristic cocaine binge leaves the young lawyer disgraced, divorced and disbarred—and set up to be the fall guy in a multimillion-dollar insurance swindle. Moore has scant faith in the criminal justice system he knows so well. "We can handle fistfights, killings, shootings, knife scrapes, larcenies, beterosexual divorces, boundary-

line disputes and drug sales ... but a well-done hustle as rare and layered as this will usually overwhelm a creaky contraption built by bewigged rustics who'd never heard of penicillin and would ooh and ahh at a lightbulb." Nice summation.

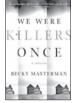
'Those People'

Louise Candlish

While few of us actually worry about a Hannibal Lecter nibbling on our memory centers, we can all imagine living next door to "neighbors from hell." That's what happens on pretty, becalmed Lowland Way in South London. One week the residents are winning prizes for their Sunday neighborhood fairs. The next week Darren Booth and his moll, Jodi, move in, set up a used-car lot on their lawn, toss up rickety scaffolding on their half of a semidetached, and blast "thrash metal" rock through the suburban night. A "charm offensive" is met with expletives. Officialdom is unhelpful. A B&B loses clients. Marriages cleave. Em and "Ant" Kendall's baby boy must wear earmuffs and a protective helmet. Then there's a — what else? — violent death. And apparently another, and just about everybody is a suspect. Happy ending? Not exactly, but the whole bordering-on-believable novel is beautifully modulated and terrifically suspenseful.

'We Were Killers Once'

Becky Masterman



The best thing about this alternative take on the Clutter family murders made famous in Truman Capote's 1965 true-crime classic 'In Cold Blood' is Masterman's meticulous look inside the head of a heartless psychopath. After retired FBI agent Brigal Quinn meets Jeremiah Beaufort for the first time, she is shrewd enough to see that "he's trying really hard to be what he imagines is human. It makes him nervous." Extrapolating from what she considers unexplained holes in Capote's account, Masterman adds a third killer to the Perry Smith-Dick Hickock duo hanged for the horrific crime. In this version, Beaufort killed two of the Kansas Clutters as well as a

Sarasota family of four. A final bloody confrontation with the ex-con Beaufort is unconvincing. But both before and after that, there's lots of thoughtful grown-up repartee between Quinn and her husband. He's a philosophical ex-priest who is uncomfortable with his wife's knack for leaving miscreants on the living room floor writhing in agony.

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

"Gotham: The Complete Series". The team behind the Fox series took a big gamble when the series launched in September 2014. They were betting that viewers would be drawn to the story of Batman's home city before Bruce Wayne decided to put on the cape and cowl to fight crime. What followed were five seasons of well-written stories where some of Batman's most noted foes got the spotlight.

None rose to the occasion more than Robin Lord Taylor as The Penguin going from mistreated servant to mayor to supervillain. Taylor is the standout, but the series is filled with great performances by others



FOX

Ben McKenzie and Donal Logue star in "Gotham." The TV series is now on DVD.

playing familiar Batman characters including Cory Michael Smith as The Riddler and Camren Bicondova as Catwoman.

The show dealt more with the efforts of Jim Gordon (Ben McKenzie) to keep the peace. McKenzie never portrayed Gordon as a typical officer, but as the surrogate Batman. In a pre-Batman Gotham City, there needed to be a prototype of the costumed hero who could be both a mentor to Bruce Wayne (David Mazouz) and moments wherein he would fail and show the wrong way to deal with the super criminals.

Gordon had to face the same villains Batman would battle, except without billions of dollars to buy fancy gadgets or vehicles. Through most of "Gotham," Gordon only had his gun and badge, and both were taken away at various points.

If you can't stand the idea of a series about Gotham City without Batman, the final episode goes right up to the point of Batman on the scene after a 10-year jump. Having Batman show up was nice, but the cast showed each week they didn't need the caped crusader.

caped crusader.

If you own the first four seasons, "Go-tham: The Complete Fifth and Final Season" is being released the same day. Either would be a super addition to a collection.

Also available on DVD:

"Pet Sematary": An ancient burial ground doesn't provide the relief a family seeks after a death.

"Little": A very demanding boss gets a new perspective on life. Regina Hall and Marsai Martin star.

"Broad City: The Complete Series": Includes five seasons of the series starring Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer as friends living and loving in New York.

"After": Chance encounter in college changes a young woman's views about life. "Silent Hill": The 2006 horror film follows

"Silent Hill": I he 2006 norror nim foliow a mother's attempt to find her daughter in a twisted town. "High Life": Robert Pattinson stars in

this sci-fi tale of a group of space travelers who find themselves at the mercy of the scientist on board their spaceship. "The Most Dangerous Year": Documen-

tary that looks at the political battle over the anti-transgender bathroom bills that were introduced into legislation in 2016.

"The Professor": Johnny Depp plays

"The Professor": Johnny Depp plays a college professor whose life is thrown into chaos when he learns he has only six months to live.

— Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service



Netflix

From left: Maya Hawke, Joe Keery and Gaten Matarazzo are standouts in Season 3 of "Stranger Things," available on Netflix.

'Stranger' danger

Season 3 of 'Stranger Things' an anxious ode to '80s consumerism

By Meredith Blake Los Angeles Times

he American mall may be dying, but in "Stranger Things 3," it's alive and well.

When it debuted in 2016, "Stranger Things" became a surprise hit for Netflix by tapping into nostalgia for the pop culture of the 1980s. Following mysterious events in the small town of Hawkins, Ind., in fall 1983, the series enticed viewers with an irresistible mashup of references to "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial," "Ghostbusters," "Poltergeist," "Firestarter," "Stand by Me" and moz."

Set in summer 1985 — as "Back to the Future" rides high at the box office and syrupy-sweet New Coke faces a backlash — the latest installment takes its obsession with Reagan-era consumer culture to a new level. The new season revives two of the decade's defining features: the Cold War and the shopping mall.

Brands have always been central to "Stranger Things" (See: Eleven's fondness for Eggos), but the third installment and its accompanying 75 promotional agreements focus the attention on materalism more than ever before. Now, the series is literally set at the mall: After two seasons at the modest Byers household, the center of action has shifted to the dazzling, new Starcourt Mall. It boasts now-defunct franchiese (Sam Goody, Waldenbooks), stalwart chains (the Gap, Burger King) and businesses redolent of the 1980s but technically still in operation (Orange Julius, Jazzercise,

One of the few fictional embellishments at Starcourt, which is actually the Gwinnett Place Mall in Duluth, Ga., is an ice cream parlor named Scoops Ahoy, where reformed bad boy Steve (Joe Keery) works alongside acerbic newcomer Robin (Maya Hawke, daughter of people-who-became-famous-in-the-80s Ethan Hawke and Uma Thurman). The shopping center has became a favorite hangout for the increasingly hormonal adolescents at the center of "Stranger Things." Not even Eleven (Millie Bobby Brown), with her supernatural powers, can resist its consumer delights: In a makeover montage set to — what else? — Madonna's 1985 ht, "Material Girl," she shops for a brightly colored new wardrobe to replace her grungy hand-me-downs.

More than just a pastiche of beloved '80s movies, "Stranger Things 3" is a

Brands have always been central to "Stranger Things," but the third installment and its accompanying 75 promotional agreements focus the attention on materialism more than ever before. Now, the series is literally set at the mall.

celebration of consumerism itself, of a go-go era when shopping malls were important not just as hubs of commerce but also as shared spaces where teenagers folded T-shirts for minimum wage or hung out aimlessly the way they now do on social media.

But while we have an '80s real-estate developer as president, our consumer habits have changed dramatically since the days when we had to schlep to the mall to buy a record or drive to the video store to browse the newest releases. Once a fixture of American suburbia, the shopping mall is increasingly endangered, thanks to online retailers

like Amazon. Malls once valued for hundreds of millions are now almost worthless or have been repurposed into churches and medical centers.

DVRs and streaming networks like Netflix have made us less tolerant of commercials than we were in the era when "Where's the Beef?," the California Raisins and Spuds MacKenzie were cultural touchstones. Video stores have gone the way of the dodo bird, and even the multiplex — another recurring location in the latest "Stranger Things" season — is ni poopardy.

Brands have enthusiastically latched onto "Stranger Things" and its sentimental portrayal of a bygone era in consumerism. Oca-Cola has reintroduced the ill-fated New Coles in a limited-edition collector's pack (cost: \$19.85). Retailers including H&M, Nike and Levi's have introduced lines of faux-vintage clothing inspired by "Stranger Things." And Burger King is introducing an Upside Down Whopper.

A local cub reporter for the local paper (remember those?), Nancy (Natalia Dyer), pitches a story about Starcourt's effect on Hawkins' economy.

"I know everyone loves the mall, but how many small businesses have closed since it opened? Five on Main at least," she says. "It's changing the fabric of our town." Replace "mall" with "Amazon Prime" — or, for that matter, "Netflix" — and it's a conversation from 2019.

There's a pointed irony to the series' affection for the days of bricks- and-mortar retail. This season also includes scenes at the multiplex and the video store, moments designed to conjure wistful 'remember when' feelings from those of us old enough to remember Blockbuster. 'Stranger Things' is a phenomenon that has played a major role in turning Netflix into a programming giant. But this season, it's also a paean to shared cultural experiences that the service has helped make obsolete.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

HEALTHY GADGETS

Zap lice, minimize bruises with these new portable devices

By CINDY KRISCHER GOODMAN Sun Sentinel

rom a small light-up pad that makes your bruise fade faster to a strip of gel that minimizes scars, new innovations to improve your health needs are on their way.

Inventors, manufacturers and health professionals from around the world descended on Miami Beach in late June to make deals and show off the newest and coolest products that tackle everything from diabetes to incontinence to fall prevention and mouth care. The Florida International Medical Expo (FIME) is the largest of its kind in the Americas with 1,200 exhibitors from more than 40 countries displaying their health care innovations

The most excitement involved wearable devices that connect to apps and monitor various body functions in adults and children.

"For the average person, there are going to be a lot

more innovative health products Sphinx to choose from," said Gil Alejo, the Smarthead Technologies exhibition managhas created er for FIME. "We a consumer are seeing what's medical available in other device for parts of the world the quick that hasn't made and easy it here yet. There treatment of is a lot of focus on head lice. convenience and using technology

to create products that are new and improved."

Anyone battling the pesky critters known as lice, or superlice, will be thrilled to learn a lice-zapping device has been developed by an Israeli company. Doron Kenigsbuch, founder and CEO of Sphinx Smarthead Technologies, says his handheld machine will kill lice, superlice and nits on a full head of hair in 15 minutes using a heating flow system. Kenigsbuch said the product will be on Amazon or sold using a private label in mid 2020 with an estimated retail price

Also from Israel, Leon Eisen, founder and CEO of Oxitone, unveiled an FDA-cleared wearable wristband that connects with an app and monitors pulse rate, skin temperature, blood oxygen saturation, steps, sleep patterns and respiratory rate. It can also

tell when the wearer falls or is about to fall. "Hospital or rehab patients can put on the monitor, get connected and go home," Eisen said, adding that he has five patents on the device that combines artificial intelligence predictive power with wrist-wearable medical technology. "The most important features is that it can track and send alerts in real time

From the Czech Republic, Pavel Benes of Elon Technologies has created rechargeable blue and vellow light pads that fade bruises. Benes traveled to Miami Beach to court plastic surgeons, sports medical facilities and distributors who might find a use for his products. The blue light, explained Benes, decreases the level of bilirubin and helps yellowish bruises disappear

faster. It also can improve The yellow light promotes cell stimulation reduces swelling from

acne healing.

Light pads like the Lucis Light Patch are used for healing bruises. Healing time depends on many factors, ike size and depth of the bruise, age of the patient and time when the patch is applied. Ideal daily treatment is up to eight hours



injuries and accelerates blood and lymph circulation for faster wound healing, he said

Until now, Benes has sold his light pads in Europe, but he said U.S. buyers showed

The Oxitone

wrist-sensor

their physicians

insight to track

disease, to identify issues

and manage

and to avoid

hospitalizations

for early

interest in the product that he believes will retail for about

From Asia to Latin America, multiple manufacturers showed off innovations in diabetes care including EPSBio of Taiwan with its Sugarwatch. The smartwatch syncs with a cellphone and measures glucose level along with sleep patterns, calorie intake and steps. It also tells time and acts as an alarm clock.

Josephine Yang said her company has been selling the digital Sugarwatch in Germany, Taiwan, the Middle East and Europe and will soon sell it in the United States for about \$300.

Also in the category of wearables, a company from the Netherlands debuted its smart underwear, with the brand name of Carin. The underwear, made by Lifesense Group, has a bluetooth sensor and app and helps women regain bladder control in a few weeks by tracking leaks, identifying triggers and tailoring an exercise program to strengthen the pelvic floor.

"We are happy to get rid of a stress incontinence for women," said Paul Swinckels, director of business development. "In most cases, within eight weeks they are cured."

Swinckels said he is trying to get FDA approval and have his underwear for sale in the U.S. by early 2020.

A product from Argentina made it clear wearables aren't only for adults. Biotrend displayed its product for babies: a foot strap that monitors sleep position, temperature, heart rate and pulse. Parents receive all of the information from the digitized foot strap onto an app on their smartphones

For cancer, new devices coming to the market offer relief from some of the side effects of treatment. A New Jersey company displayed its new product, CHEM

EPSBio's

ıgarwatch

lps users

their

glucose

levels for

in a smart,

Mouthpiece, which the founder says has multiple uses. For cancer patients, the silicone ice pack for inside the mouth stays cold for 30 minutes at a time and touches all the mouth surfaces.

"A lot of times chemo drugs cause sores that are so damaging, the patient has to stop cancer treat-ment," said Christopher Rowland, while demonstrating the product. "Our founder wanted to find a better alternative to ice chips." Rowland said the CHEM mouthpiece spent three years in research and development and also is being marketed to oral surgeons and dentists for relief after mouth surgery or wisdom teeth operations

stylish way Along with devices to help people feel healthy, vendors displayed all sorts of inventions to help people look good. Lilfesil of Brazil unveiled a new type of breast implant as a option to silicone, along with gel sheets to minimize scars and keloids. BioPlus Co., a South Korean company, showcased its semi-permanent injectable filler with hyaluronic acid that can be used as a possible alternate to nose surgery, or to erase deep wrinkles.





veekend: Family



Elias Benitez, 3, left. listens to Nadiah Porter, Community Partnerships Manager for Book Harvest, as she reads during a program called "Wash & Learn," which engages children at laundromats across Durham, N.C.

Wash, read, repeat

Program encourages literacy by leaving books at laundromats

By JACQUELYN MELINEK The News & Observer (Raleigh, N.C.)

n The Wash House laundromat, a child sits on a gray carpet, holding clean socks in one hand and a new book in the other.

He got it through a program that is turning laundromats into learning spaces where families can read books, play games and use learning materials while they wait for their

The Wash & Learn program is a partnership among Book Harvest, The Wash House laundromats and Libraries Without Borders an international literacy organization, and funded by The Triangle Learning Network

In mid-May, Rachel Stine, the program director for Book Harvest, visited one of the laundromats to volunteer with the program, which offers story times twice a week and leaves free books for people to take.

But instead of reading to the 3-year-old there that day, Stine sat and watched the boy sitting on his mother's lap at the child-sized table, reading a book about animals.

"Roar!" he giggled.
"Hiss." he whispered.

"That's right," his mother said as she flipped the page.

Wash & Learn helps prepares children to reach third-grade reading proficiency and succeed beyond that, Stine said.

"All of this happened right before my eyes," she said. "It was because these tools were available to him. He was naturally engaged. I showed up and even if I didn't (read to him), he was already reading with his mom. He was learning.

This was when Stine realized the potential of the program.

"What would have happened if (the books) weren't there?" she asked. "He wouldn't have had that resource to build that background knowledge and vocabulary of those

'The perfect place'

In February, Wash & Learn opened locations at The Wash House on Chapel Hill Road and Liberty Street in Durham, N.C. A third will open next month at the company's laundromat on Fayetteville Street.

"I would love to see this program replicated throughout the Triangle and into different parts of the state," owner Lee Williford said. "Durham is the perfect place for this type of programming model to begin and find success, and then be launched throughout a broader footprint.

Book Harvest, which runs Wash & Learn in Durham, has more than 30 free bookshelves in various businesses and public offices throughout the city.

"We want to make sure families have access to books and those books are everywhere in our community," Stine said. "Rather than having families look for those resources, we are meeting them where they are.

Last year, Book Harvest gave children almost 250,000 books.

And in Durham, Book Harvest's one millionth book, "The Day You Begin" by Jacqueline Woodson, was hugged kissed and went home by a curious 2-year-old.

Preparing for the future

According to the American Asso-

ciation of Pediatrics, children who begin reading earlier tend to excel in school compared to children who are not exposed to language and books at a young age. The median income for a family

using a laundromat is \$28,000, said Adam Echelman, the U.S. executive director of Libraries Without Borders. That's just above the federal poverty level for a family of four.

A report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation found there are 7.9 million low-income children, ages newborn through 8 in the United States. More than 80 percent, or about 6 million, are not reading on grade level by third grade, the most important predictor for high school graduation and career success

Libraries Without Borders launched Wash & Learn four years ago in Morrisania, one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City. "We were trying to figure out

where the biggest gaps in library services were," Echelman said. "We looked where the 'dead zones' were, where books weren't

He and other volunteers tried giving out children's books in parks, hospitals and bus stations, but had little luck.

"But one day we set up shop outside a laundromat in the Bronx," Echelman said. "We realized that we were getting some of the most engagement we've ever seen.'

People are stuck in laundromats for a couple of hours and return almost every week, which helps volunteers get to know families.

Today Wash & Learn has 20 program locations in eight states: North Carolina, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Texas, California and New York

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Was it humidity, or perhaps stupidity?

ecently, while my husband, Francis, and I were lugging our window air conditioners out of the attic, he relayed a personal story I'd never heard in our 25 years of marriage. I'm not sure if it was the sticky weather we were experiencing or the sweat mustache that had sprouted on my upper lip, but Francis was reminded of an incident that happened 30 years ago in the oppressive heat of Pensacola, Fla. — one that could have ended his military career before it really

He was eight weeks into Aviation Officer Candidate School, when on a sizzling morning, his battalion was called outside the barracks to line up for an inspection, which were really routine harassment sessions meant to test the candidates' resolve. Francis stood at attention with his fellow recruits, eyes forward, monitoring peripherally as Staff Sergeant Hodgeman, USMC, made his way down the line. One recruit missed a belt loop. Another had a scuffed shoe. Each was doled out a dose of humiliation, along with an appropriate number of "hop and pops.

Upon reaching Francis, the Sergeant glared intimidatingly from under the bill of his Marine Corps campaign hat, slowly turning his line of sight downward to look at Francis' uniform. His carefully measured scrutiny stopped abruptly at Francis' belt buckle. Francis braced himself for a verbal assault.

"Did you even polish this?!" he spat out.

"Sir, yes SIR!" Francis lied.
"Look at this!" the sergeant demanded.

"SNAP!" Francis shouted as trained, and dropped his eyes to the hazy, dull buckle.

"If you polished it, how did it get like this?!"

In such crucial moments during every military service person's basic training, one is expected to swallow one's pride, admit all transgressions, and accept the consequences without complaint. Francis knew that recruits who buck this time-honored system generally fail, but on that steamy Florida morning, while his angry superior was waiting for the expected response, standing rigidly, eyes pointed, Francis felt a twinge of mischief.

Although fully cognizant that mischievous behavior could ruin his chances of becoming a military officer, his mind quickly weighed the pros and cons of being funny rather than obedient. (Incidentally, Francis and I would later realize we had this character trait in common.)

As the scales tipped toward impishness, he formed the response that would either charm his superior officer or throw eight weeks of basic training down the latrine.

After a tense pause, Francis, standing at perfect, obedient attention, barked the risky reply for all in the battal-ion to hear: "PERHAPS THE HUMIDITY, SIR!"

For several knife-edged seconds, all that could be heard was the distant whirring of aircraft propellers. Francis' mind flashed with scenes of heading home in disgrace on a Trailways bus to report that he had been kicked out of the Navy for insubordination.

But then, he heard a snort, a muffled chuckle, and felt the welcome relief of a battalion full of stifled grins. Sergeant Hodgeman's hat remained angled toward the buckle, concealing his face, but Francis could see the Marine's jaw clenching in an effort to hide a smile. With a restrained grunt, the sergeant regained his composure and raised his head, and with a twinkle in his otherwise fearsome eyes, he sidestepped down the line to the next recruit, leaving Francis' Navy career intact for another

Military friends have told similar stories, of moments when they took a stupid risk with a superior. One was ordered by his boatswain's mate to be sure he had the bitter end while securing lines, and he replied indignantly, "I know I'm new here, but I'm not going to put the line in my mouth to see if it's bitter or not!'

No one knows why each foolish recruit survived his or her own idiocy in those fateful moments, but one thing is for certain: It most definitely wasn't the humidity, Sir.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

zoológico

104 Father of the

fastener

factory?

125 Charm

127 Expunge

or plot

123 Tropical scurrier

128 Word before shot

Constitution

108 Extended family

of "tsar" in Russian

stoppage at a shoe

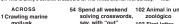
103 First letter

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

ELID 'DHONES

BY EMILY CARROLL / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Emily Carroll is a 2016 medical-school graduate now finishing her residency in New York City. She finds crossword con de the hospital." This puzzle was initially inter ares), but when she couldn't make the theme work satisfactorily, she came up with more examples and expanded it into a 21 x 21. This is Emily's seventh crossword for The Times and her first Sunday. — W.S.



- mollusk 8 Victorious crv
- 14 At first, say 20 So-called "Crossroads 59 Driver of "BlacKkKla- 106 PC key
- 21 Wife in F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Tender Is the Night"
- 22 Uprights, e.g. 23 Low end?
- 25 What sunblock blocks, briefly 26 Rushes
- 27 Hangout on "The Simpsons" 28 One of two for a buck?
- 30 Somewhat, slangily 32 Go astray
- 33 Part of town that may be
- dangerous 35 Tater 38 Extraterrestrial
- from the planet Melmac 40 Emphatic ending
- with ves or no 42 Bulging bicep, in
- 43 Raise
- 44 Wet
- 48 Agreement for exporting essential
- 51 Raggedy
- 52 Around an hour after noon

- 55 Dummkopfs 56 Movie-rating org. 58 Semi-essential part?
- nsman' 61 Most pallid 112Utterly useless done in formal attire? 63 Exercise program
- 66 Horse operas 114Letter-shaped 68 Top squads 69 Sports-page listings 115 Laugh riot 71 Avoid cooked foods 118 Cause of a work
- 75 Beyond prim and proper 77 Sturdily built friend on "Friends"? 124 Put on a pedestal 79 Relative of a flute
- 82 Statement often starting "I ..." 84 Egg head?
- 85 Train transportation 86 "Baby Blues" or "Rhymes With Orange"

spots?

96 Squirrels away

98 "What ____?"

99 Maestro's gift

female fighter

inducted into

the U.F.C. Hall of

100

Rousey, first

- 87 PC key DOWN 89 Rita who played Anita 1 Some turban wearers in "West Side Story" 2 Film composer
- Morricone 92 Setting for many Twins games: Abbr. 3 Doe follower, in song 93 Spotted animal 4 Breaks along the
 - with a lot of sore Panama Canal? 5 "Well, ____-di-dah!"
 - 6 Commercial prefix with lever
 - 7 "That's so-o-o gross!" 47 Undiluted
 - 8 Is a willing participant?49 Like Easter Island
 - 9 Runs out of gas 10 Here, to Henri
 - 11 Underworld hoss

- 12 Troy story 13 Joan of Arc. at the time of her death 14 Fit for a king 15 Skin care brand 16 Attorney general under both Bush 41 and Trump 17Santa ____ winds s 18 ____ sauce
- cap 24 d'oeuvre 29 Slangy affirmation 31 Rare solo voice in opera
- 33 Arthur with a Tony 34 UnitedHealthcare competitor
- 126 A cobbler might use 35 Back-comb 36 Multi-time Pulitzer finalist, including
 - for the volume "Lovely, Dark.

 - component

 - 50 Full of enthusiasm
 - 53 Construction girders 57 Not without sacrifice

- 19 Symbol on a Mariners

 - Deep: Stories" (2014)
- 37 Meet on the down-low 60 Call into question 62 Permeate
- 41 Fixes up, in a way 43 Circuit-board
- 65 Kid-lit character 44 Fearsome snake
- 45 Stoned 46 Dumbstruck
- 72 Jurisdiction 73 Stomach
 - 74 Painful nainthall mementos

64 Shout from

67 In regard to

a lottery winner

- 76 Rapid movement of the eye from one point to another 78 Surrealist Tanguy
- 79 Groups in the quarterfinals, e.g. 80 Loses enthusiasm Thanks for noticing
 - 81 Elicit a smile from 83 Last Oldsmobile
- ever produced 88 Sent 2008 financial news
 - 90 Pearl clutcher's cry 91 Bit of brewing
 - equipment 94 "Sure thing, dude!"
- 97 Untangle 101"In your dreams!" 104 2016 film set in

95 Boatload

- Polynesia 105 Reckon, informally 107 Section of a high school yearbook
- 109 Native Alaskan 110 Popular corn chip
- 111 What radio signals travel through, with
- 112 Spring's opposite
- 113 Nongreen salad ingredient 115 Merest taste
- 116 Part of a sci-fi film's budget 117 French way 119 The Braves, or
- scoreboards 120 One of many extras in air travel nowaday
- 121 A little fun? 122 Letters on some
- luggage to New York

GUNSTON STREET

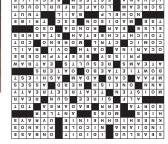
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FACES



Laugh, cry, call Grandma

Star, director of 'The Farewell' love the connection it's making with fans

is more than

just a film to Wang; its

very existence is part of

a real story that continues

offscreen. That's because

(spoiler alert!) the real Nai Nai

is still with us, six years after

her initial diagnosis - and

her condition and the

premise of her

granddaughter's

film.

By JEN YAMATO Los Angeles Times

ver breakfast on a recent morning in Beverly Hills, Awkwafina proudly estimated that 80% of the people she's met at screenings of her latest film, "The Farewell," have come up to her misty-eyed. Hearing that, the film's writer-director, Lulu Wang, smiled.

Those tears are validating for the rising filmmaker, who based her second feature on an "actual lie" her family agreed to tell her grandmother in 2013. When the matriarch was diagnosed with terminal cancer, family members requested she not be

told to spare her the grim prospect of facing the truth in her remaining months — a practice not uncom-'The Farewell' mon in China.

"My goal is to leave people talking about the film, or talking about their own lives and their own family, or calling their grandma," said Wang, whose parents emigrated from China to Miami when she was 6 years old. "That's my gift to the world.

We should all call our grandmas more."

Awkwafina — the stage name of rapper and actress Nora Lum, who scored killer breakout roles in last summer's "Crazy Rich Asians" and "Ocean's Eight" — stars in "The Farewell" as struggling New York City artist Billi. The fictional stand-in for Wang makes a last-minute trek to China to say goodbye to her dying grandmother (Zhao Shuzhen) over the objections of her relatives, including her immigrant parents, Jian (Diana Lin) and Haiyan (Tzi Ma).

They worry Billi is too American to keep her emotions from betraying the truth to her grandma, whom she affectionately calls "Nai Nai." But as the family gathers at a wedding staged to bring the clan together one last time, conflicting cultural ideas about identity, mortality and filial piety collide as everyone aches from the grief of their shared secret

The extraordinarily personal inspiration means "The Farewell" is more than just a film to Wang; its very existence is part of a real story that continues offscreen.

That's because (spoiler alert!) the real Nai Nai is still with us, six

years after her initial diagnosis - and she remains unaware of both her condition and the premise of her granddaughter's film.

Nevertheless, Wang shot "The Farewell" in her grandmother's actual neighborhood and the matriarch was a frequent visitor to the set in Changchun, China, squeezing Lum's cheeks and attempting to feed her filmmaker granddaughter between scenes. She even has a cameo onscreen, scooting across a busy street in her motorized wheelchair as actors playing her family walk by. The secret has been upheld this far. But the film just locked a Chi-

nese distributor, which Wang acknowledges could throw a wrench into the family's pact.
"I was like, 'Guys, remember how we were always

like, punting the question until later?" Wang said. 'We have Chinese distribution, which means they're going to cut a Chinese trailer, and all the marketing is still going to come out."

The film's title in Chinese, she says, trans-lates to "Don't Tell Her." Wang shrugged. Yes, it's complicated. But that's life.

I still think the same thing about the decision, which is that I can't make a moral judgment around it," she said. "But I do often think that none of this would have happened without the lie, right? The lie has enabled me to make this film, to tell this story, but more importantly it enabled me to spend time with my grandmother.'

she remains unaware of both To make the film, Wang fought battles every step of the way, like the notes she'd get when pitching the project to studio execs. Notes urging her to hew closer to conventional Hollywood storytelling and structure - adding a love interest for Billi, for example, or giving her a lesson to learn

"They were like, 'But what are the stakes? An 80-year-old Chinese grandma? Who's gonna care?' remembered Wang. "Now the film's out and people are like, 'Oh, my God, it reminds me of my grandma, I was sobbing,' and I'm like 'THANK YOU'

Lum said reactions to the film underscore how strongly "The Farewell" resonates with audiences of all backgrounds - a testament to the value of empowering more voices in the industry. When you allow us to tell our own stories, you don't know who

'How to Get Away with Murder' to end next season

It will be case closed next season for "How to Get Away with Murder," with the show's upcoming sixth season to be its last.

The series and its star, Viola Davis, are leaving behind history: In 2015, Davis became the first African American to win an Emmy for best lead actress in a drama series.

In a statement Thursday announcing the show's end, ABC Entertainment President Karey Burke praised Davis for her unforgettable portrayal of a female antihero.

Davis plays Annalise Keating. a brilliant attorney and professor at a Philadelphia law school, where she teaches her no-holdsbarred views of justice and life and enlists her students in her cases and misadventures.

Series creator and executive producer Pete Nowalk called ending the show a "brutal decision," but said the story demanded it.

"For me, Annalise Keating's journey has always had a clear ending," Nowalk said. "Knowing I have 15 episodes left to finish her story, and the chance to give all the characters their own killer endings" is a rare gift.

He advised fans to "buckle up" for the show's final twists when it returns on Sept. 26

Cristela Alonzo calls book 'mixtape memoir'

Cristela Alonzo is telling her story in words and music, what she calls a "mixtape memoir."

The actress and producer's book, "Music to My Years," comes out Oct. 8. She will track her rise from living with her family in an abandoned diner to her fame as creator and star of the sitcom "Cristela," and stand-up performer featured in the Netflix special "Lower Classy." The link is music and television and how they helped define moments in her life, like how the theme to "The Golden Girls" led to a trip to the principal's office.

In a statement issued Wednesday through Atria Books, Alonzo said she wasn't inspired by "ego," but out of a desire to connect her story to others.

"Also," she says of her book, "there's jokes in it."

Other news

- Denise Nickerson, played perpetual gum-chewer Violet Beauregarde at age 14 in the 1971 classic "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory," died Wednesday after suffering a medical emergency. She was 62.
- The family of late Disney Channel star Cameron Boyce confirmed the actor died from a seizure that stemmed from epilepsy. Boyce died July 6 at age 20. His family initially announced he had died from a seizure as a result of a medical condition, but did not disclose what it was at the

From wire services

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State of migrant camps should appall all

BY DOYLE MCMANUS Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON hildren held in overcrowded cells for weeks. Children sleeping on concrete floors because there aren't enough mattresses. Children in filthy clothes with no showers, soap or toothbrushes. Children as young as 8 put in charge of infants because there's no one to take care of them.

There's no mystery why our taxpayerfunded detention camps for immigrant children are such a cruel, appalling mess. They're run by agencies that were never designed to take care of kids, overseen by an administration bent on punishing illegal immigrants to produce an imaginary deterrent effect.

But the explanations don't excuse the horrifying details that have trickled into view despite the Trump administration's efforts to hide them.

First came lawyers' reports from the Border Patrol facility in Clint, Texas, saying children in overcrowded cells were being denied soap and toothbrushes. Acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan, in reflexive denial, dismissed the accounts as "unsubstantiated allega-tions regarding a single Border Patrol

Except they weren't. Only a few days later, his department's internal watchdog reported that the problems were widespread

"Children at three of the five Border Patrol facilities we visited had no access to showers (and) limited access to a change of clothes," the inspector general wrote. Overcrowding in adult and child facilities represent an immediate risk to the health and safety of DHS agents," he added.

The horror stories keep coming.

A Texas pediatrician who visited a warehouse holding more than 1,000 children said she found "a baby who'd been fed from the same unwashed bottle for days; children showing signs of malnutrition and dehydration"; and poor sanitation "tantamount to intentionally causing the spread of disease.

The United Nations high commissioner for human rights, Michelle Bachelet, said she was "deeply shocked that children are forced to sleep on the floor in overcrowded facilities, without access to adequate health care or food," and added that the conditions may violate international law.

A Justice Department lawyer argued in court that the federal government isn't legally required to provide child detainees soap, dry clothing - or sleep.

Some of these accounts may turn out to be exaggerated. President Donald Trump naturally dismissed them as "a hoax." But no one has refuted the reports from the Homeland Security Department's inspec-tor general, which list violations of the government's own standards in painstaking detail. "My explanation is that it's an extraordinarily challenging situation," McAleenan said this week.

That's not much of an explanation. Here are others:

First, the surge of illegal immigrants and asylum-seekers, including thousands of children, hasn't ended. Border Patrol officials say their detention facilities can hold 4,000 people at full capacity. At the end of June, they held an estimated 12,000.

Second, the administration's "family separation" policy, which Trump publicly canceled amid bipartisan uproar last year, has continued in stealth mode. Children are no longer routinely separated from their parents, but children traveling with other relatives - siblings or grandparents, for example - still are. "They're just not a family unit," Border Patrol enforcement chief Brian Hastings said at a recent Senate hearing.

Third, the Border Patrol is a law enforcement agency, not a child care provider. It's supposed to process children within 72 hours and then release them to relatives or send them to child care facilities administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. But the HHS says it has no room, and the administration doesn't want to release children to their relatives so they're stuck in the Border Patrol's holding cells, tents and warehouses.

Trump has naturally blamed Democrats in Congress for the mess - mostly because they had the effrontery to demand policy changes before voting to spend more money on detaining immigrants or building his wall. But the Democrats didn't devise Trump's publicly declared strategy of making conditions bad for migrants to deter them from coming. That didn't stop families who fled vicious gang wars in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras in fear for their lives.

Finally, this shouldn't be a partisan de-bate, even in an election season — but, of course, it is.

"The Democrats' bad immigration laws, which could be easily fixed, are the prob-lem," Trump tweeted. On the other side, Democratic presidential candidates have been outdoing each other in supporting leniency for migrants who enter the country illegally.

Still this isn't about which immigration policy you prefer. You can espouse a border wall, family deportation and "zero tolerance," as Trump does; that doesn't excuse cruelty to children, whether by incompetence or design.

Doyle McManus is a Washington columnist for the Los Angeles Times and director of the journalism program at Georgetown University.

Make exit plan the priority in Afghanistan

By JERROD A. LABER Special to Stars and Stripes

.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad expressed significant optimism about the progress made in talks with the Taliban this past weekend, saying the current round of negotiations — aimed at ending the Afghanistan War — have been "the most productive" yet. The greatest challenge, he said, has been "to get a framework agreed to that isn't just a withdrawal agreement" but also a political road map to ensure "that we can leave a good legacy behind with a government and political order that Afghans

While we should wish the Afghans well negotiation goals like a cease-fire and intra-Afghan dialogue are admirable - these talks are not related to U.S. security and should not be used as a pretext to slow U.S. withdrawal from this conflict. President Donald Trump's campaign trail instincts on leaving Afghanistan were correct. It's been nearly 18 years, and little has been accomplished. The U.S. is the most powerful country in the world - it doesn't need any cooperation from the Taliban for its security. Tying a withdrawal to a successful political resolution paves the way for a stalled exit, given that prospects for actual, long-term peace in Afghanistan remain poor. Chaining a U.S. withdrawal to the success

of an intra-Afghan dialogue is a reckless decision precisely because Afghanistan's political future is so precarious. The Taliban have spent years regaining power, controlling and contesting more and more and NATO has done nothing to weaken their resolve - the longer the U.S. stays in Afghanistan, the weaker our hand and the stronger the Taliban's.

And the Afghan dialogue now taking place is not between the Taliban and the Afghan government. The Taliban don't recognize the U.S.-backed government in Kabul as legitimate and are speaking to its delegations purely as fellow Afghans with no official authority. Though the Taliban have expressed some openness to more inclusive political arrangements, the sincerity of their intentions is unclear.

As Ashley Jackson, a research associate at the Overseas Development Institute, wrote in Foreign Policy, Taliban foot soldiers and commanders see no point in talking with the Afghan government because they consider it a U.S. puppet. "If the United States stops their support to the government for even a month, we would be able to take all of Afghanistan," one Taliban commander said. Realistically, the Taliban will accept peace only on their own terms, which will likely include retention of control over current territories and even expansion to contested areas.

Meanwhile, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has continually demanded the Taliban talk to his government. He is running for reelection in contests scheduled to take place in September, and he is adamant that these elections will "make sure those negotiating across the table from the Taliban have a strong mandate to carry out any agreement they reach."

But the Afghan electoral system is a wreck. Ghani's 2014 victory was rife with allegations of systemic fraud, causing im mense political and civil strife. Add to that the kleptocratic nature of the Afghan government, which fails to provide the most basic services while elites line their pockets, and you find that the mandate for which Ghani is searching likely doesn't exist.

Let's assume a deal is struck, and it carves out some space for the current Afghan government to continue to exist. Expect the Taliban to break the terms of the agreement. If that happens, the U.S. should not stall its proposed exit or even reescalate in the event the Taliban proves themselves an unreliable partner.

For this reason, Khalilzad's insistence on getting a political road map out of these talks is worrisome. It could be used as a pretext to indefinitely delay U.S. exit.

All we need in Afghanistan is a government that is not a threat to the U.S. - the rest should be left up to the Afghans. The Taliban are an inherently parochial group that poses no threat to American security, and we can monitor and counter anti-American terrorism threats anywhere in the world without a permanent military presence occupying Afghanistan. Staying is just political insurance, not based on a necessary or viable strategy.

America has already spent too much blood and treasure in Afghanistan. The only priority now should be a military exit to stop the bleeding on U.S. taxpayers and servicemembers (literally). Everything else concerning the internal Afghan political order is out of our hands.

Jerrod A. Laber is a fellow at Defense Priorities, and a senior contributor for Young Voices.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other stateside syndicates.

Perot's business, political achievements aren't tall tales Boston Herald

Ross Perot was not a large man: barely 5 feet, 6 inches tall, and maybe 150 pounds. But he was a giant.

Perot died in Dallas on Tuesday at age 89. A family spokesman said the cause was leukemia.

He led an amazing life serving his country, amassing a fortune on his own and ultimately launching a third-party run for president in 1992 that wound up garnering 19 percent of the popular vote. It was the most successful third-party run since Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive Party splintered off from President William Howard Taff's Republican Party in 1912, throwing the election to Democrat Woodrow Wilson.

Perot may have had a similar effect in 1992, and the reverberations are still being felt today.

By any independent accounting, H. Ross Perot was quintessentially American, and unabashedly Texan. Born Henry Ray Perot in Texarkana in 1930, Perot was a born fireball — he began earning money at age 7, and by the time he was 12 he was delivering his local newspaper, the Texarkana Gazette, on horseback and established a hugely successful route.

It was a set piece in Perot's life. He wasn't the brightest student, but refused to be outworked. After two years at a junior college, Perot earned an appointment to the Naval Academy. He became class president, graduating in 1953.

His four-year stint in the Navy was too late for Korea and too soon for Victnam. In 1957, he joined civilian life and began a Midas-like career. He started at IBM in Dallas, at one point selling his annual quota in three weeks. The slowness of corporate life rankled him, so he quit, founding his own company — Electronic Data Systems — that became a mammoth force in the burgeoning computer industry. He made a fortune when EDS went public in 1968, becoming one of America's wealthiest me.

He was a titan in business but had bigger ideas. He became not just a philanthropist, but an evangelist for causes he believed in, and one of those was care for veterans. In 1969, alarmed by reports of mistreatment of American POWs in Vietnam, he chartered two jets and filled them with food, medicine and supplies. The North Vietnamese turned him away, but he raised awareness. Even bolder was his rescue effort in 1979 in Iran, where he authorized a commando raid that freed two EDS employees from an Iranian prison and served as the basis for Ken Follett's best-seller "On Wings of Eagles."

But it was Perot's foray into politics that has had lasting impact. Perot hated inefficiency, and saw it everywhere in Washington.

George H.W. Bush was poised to get another four years against the Democrats, who settled on a governor from a small southern state: Bill Clinton.

Enter Perot. Bush was flailing, and while Clinton was a new voice, he wasn't exactly a fresh one. Perot dazzled a disaffected electorate with his straight talk, his impeccable background and his penchant for success.

His populist manner in many ways was the precursor to Donald Trump, another political newcomer with a history of getting things done and saying exactly what was on his mind. Perot took 20 million



Ross Perot laughs after saying "Watch my lips" in response to reporters asking when he planned to formally enter the 1992 presidential race. Perot died Tuesday at 89.

votes in 1992, although he didn't win a single state. Bush gained 38% and Clinton became president.

Epstein charges raise grave questions about Acosta The Washington Post

Eleven years later, Jeffrey Epstein's accusers have another shot at the justice they say they were denied when then-U.S. Attorney — and now Labor Secretary — Alexander Acosta cut him a lenient nonprosecution agreement in a major sex crimes case. Still left unanswered is why it took so long for the Justice Department to pursue Epstein with the assertiveness his alleged crimes deserve. A Wednesday news conference by Acosta did not adequately explain or excuse the delay.

Federal prosecutors in New York, where the wealthy financier owns a mansion, released a 14-page indictment on Monday alleging that Epstein engaged in sex trafficking and sex trafficking conspiracy by creating "a vast network of underage victims for him to sexually exploit." Epstein allegedly lured the victims to his homes to perform massages but would then pay them to engage in a range of sex acts.

The indictment also alleges that Epstein would pay some of the victims to recruit others, creating a sort of sex pyramid scheme, and that the victims were as young as 14 years old. The allegations are strikingly similar to those Epstein faced when Acosta examined his behavior 11 years ago yet allowed him to plead not to any federal charge, but to state charges of soliciting prostitution, for which he served 13 months in a county gail.

Acosta insisted on Wednesday that, at the time, "based on the evidence, there was value to getting a guilty plea," as opposed to "rolling the dice" on a trial. That raises the question of why federal prosecutors appear willing to roll the dice now. Acosta on Tuesday tweeted that "new evidence and additional testimony is available" that would allow "an important opportunity to more fully bring him to justice."

There is some new evidence available, in part because of the work of New York prosecutors and in part because of a superb investigation by Miami Herald reporter Julie Brown. Yet that investigation revealed that Florida officials a decade ago believed the evidence against Epstein was already "overwhelming, including phone call records, copies of written phone messages from the girls found in Epstein's trash and Epstein's Ifight logs." If there was more evidence to be found, a more committed prosecution might have unearthed it 11 years ago.

Acosta nevertheless argued on Wednesday that times have changed since 2008. "We now have 12 years of knowledge and hindsight, and we live in a very different world," he said. "Today's world does not allow some of the victim shaming" that might have occurred at a trial 11 years ago, he maintained, as though he were referring to 1958 rather than 2008.

It is possible that everything that Acosta said is true — that career prosecutors in his office 11 years ago calculated that it was not worth pursuing federal charges against a rich defendant with a dream team of lawyers prepared to attack the credibility and character of the victims prosecutors sought to protect. Yet, no matter how well-intentioned, Acosta and the lawyers working under him still made the wrong call.

Citizenship question never about improving 2020 census Los Angeles Times

Seizing on an opening provided by the Supreme Court, the Trump administration is scrambling to offer a new, legally defensible rationale for adding a citizenship question to the 2020 census. But if's all a charade ordered up by President Donald Trump, who is determined to enlist the decennial census in his crusade against people living in the country illegally. Lower federal courts across the country have properly refused to play along; the Supreme Court should belatedly do the same.

The background to this story should be familiar by now. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross announced in March 2018 that the government was amending the census form to ask about the citizenship states of every person in the country. He was sued almost immediately by a number of immigrant-heavy citizes and states, which argued that the change would deter some immigrants — and especially those living here illegally — from responding to

The resulting undercount would shift political power and resources away from communities with large immigrant populations, which tend to vote for Democrats. But Ross insisted the administration's motives were pure; the idea for the question, he said, came from the Justice Department, which supposedly sought the data to help it enforce the Voting Rights Act.

After lower federal courts blocked the citizenship question, the case made its way to a divided Supreme Court. The majority held that Ross' explanation wasn't credible, although the justices gave him the chance to offer one that was.

That should have been that. Administration officials had repeatedly said that they needed to start printing the census forms by July in order to fulfill their constitutional duty, and the court's ruling left no time to keep the legal battle going. Sadly, like an investor pouring good money after bad, Trump doesn't know when to stop fighting for the wrong thing, especially on issues involving immigration. Contradicting the initial response from administration lawyers, Trump ordered his subordinates to keep searching for a way to add the citizenship question.

The problem for 'the administration is that it has been operating from a disingenuous premise from the start. It strains credulity to think that Trump would be eager to bring more Voting Rights lawsuits against cities and states that are suppressing minorities' right to vote; after all, he appointed an election fraud commission that seemed to exist mainly to justify more vote suppression.

The evidence gathered in the lawsuits against Ross offer a much more believable explanation: The administration recognized that adding a citizenship question would deter nonctizens (or the citizens whose households they share) from responding to the census, leading to an undercount—especially in Latino communities, which tend to be dominated by Democrats. Trump's uniquely hostile and intimidating hetoric about illegal immigration would only depress participation more. But the administration can hardly afford

to admit as much in court.

That leaves the administration with only one realistic option: to come up with a new lie about its rationale. While four of his conservative justices might not have a problem with that, Chief Justice John Roberts seems to recognize that letting administrations blatantly deceive the public about the purpose of their actions would give free rein to the basest impulses of the worst presidents.

The constitutional purpose of the census is clear, and the administration should fulfill it. The administration's purpose in seeking to add the citizenship question is clear too, no matter what it tells the courts. They should not be fooled.

What McGrath offers her state in challenging McConnell The (Frankfort, Ky.,) State Journal

On Tuesday, Kentuckians woke to the news that Democrat Amy McGrath will challenge 34-year U.S. senator and current Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for his seat in next year's election.

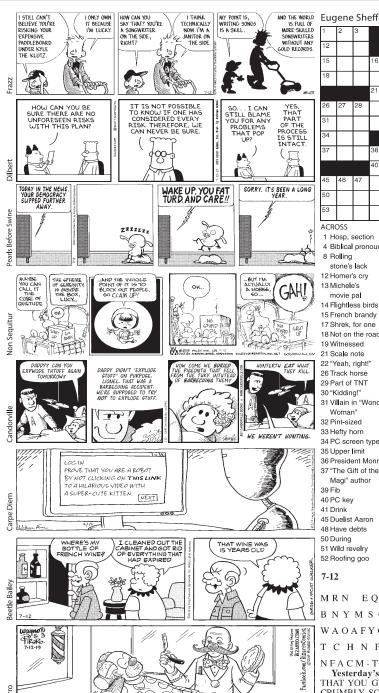
Pundits were quick to label McGrath, a former Marine fighter pilot, the underdog in the race. In fact, the Bluegrass State has not elected a Democrat to the Senate since Wendell Ford in 1992.

However, after her narrow loss to U.S. Rep. Andy Barr in last year's midterm election, McGrath has the name recognition and financial backing to give McConnell, well, a run for his money. During her first congressional bid her offers reached roughly \$8.6 million — out-fundraising Barr by \$3 million.

The Democrats, in particular Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, of New York, handpicked McGrath because "she is the one that has what it takes" to defeat McConnell, who relishes the nickname "Grim Reaper" of the Senate graveyard—a place where House majority legislation goes to die. It's also true that Kentuckians don't care much for outsiders meddling in our elections, so support from Schumer and other national liberals could prove a curse as much as a blessing for McGrath.

Seeking his seventh term and on the same ballot as his ally President Donald Trump, the 77-year-old senator is expected to rely on the same message that has served him well for decades — he can help stop Democratic bills from reaching the Oval Office.

While still in its infancy, the race pits old against new. There is more than just a 33-year age gap and the letters "D, E, F" separating these two. Will the incumbent's power persevere or does his lengthy tenure make him more vulnerable? Only time will tell.



Bizarro

Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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ACROSS

- 1 Hosp. section 4 Biblical pronoun
- 8 Rolling
- stone's lack
- 12 Homer's cry
- 13 Michele's
- movie pal
- 15 French brandy
- 17 Shrek, for one 18 Not on the road
- 19 Witnessed
- 22 "Yeah, right!"
- 26 Track horse 29 Part of TNT
- 30 "Kiddina!" 31 Villain in "Wonder
- Woman"
- 32 Pint-sized 33 Hefty horn
- 34 PC screen type 35 Upper limit
- 36 President Monroe 37 "The Gift of the
- Magi" author
- 40 PC key
- 41 Drink
- 45 Duelist Aaron
- 48 Have debts
- 51 Wild revelry
- 52 Roofing goo

- 53 Thanksgiving veggies
- 54 Caustic cleaners
- 55 Metal source

25 LAX guesses

29 Cowboy moniker

awesome!"

33 Cardio-boxing

36 Carter and Choo

39 Feudal superior

42 Division word

44 Literary Jane

46 Ms. Thurman

routine

38 Dweebs

43 Endure

45 Inlet

47 Brink

35 "- Miniver"

26 - Alto

27 Foot part

28 Give up

32 "Totally

- DOWN
- 1 Concept
- 2 Paint layer
- 3 "Nope!"
- 4 Quake
- 5 Crude home
- 6 Brit. record label
- 7 Ugly building 8 Cat calls?
- 9 Texter's "Wow!"
- 10 California's
- Big -
- 11 Away from NNW 16 Rx amounts
- 20 Sashimi fish

- 23 "E pluribus --'
- 49 Sardonic Answer to Previous Puzzle

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7 - 12

CRYPTOQUIP

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NFACM-TNWW.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THESE COOKIES THAT YOU GUYS BAKED ARE TOO HARD AND CRUMBLY. SORRY, I'M BEING BRITTLY HONEST.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals T



3333

*

Fugene Sheffer Crossword

Eugene Shener Crossword												
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ACROSS

- 1 Amalgamated 6 Kigali's country 12 Shakespearean
- heiress
- 13 Knight suits
- 14 East 15 Stops slouching
- 16 Lighten
- 17 Band boosters 19 Ambulance initials
- 20 Ms. McEntire 22 Wee bit
- 24 Flight stat
- 27 Light beams 29 Sphinx site 32 Justin Bieber
- sona 35 Pantheon
- members 36 Vogue rival
- 37 Tolkien creature 38 Here (Fr.)
- 40 "- Three Lives"
- 42 ISP choice 44 Singer Hendryx
- 46 Craving
- 50 Upstanding guy 52 Exotic marketplace
- 54 Greek islander 55 Expands a
- computer file 56 Tenor Enrico 57 Fashion

7 - 13

Diet 10 King Features BIZARRO,COM

Facebook.com/BizarroComics

I see. When a kid eats peas one

at a time, that's being fussy, but when an adult does it,

that's practicing mindfulness.

DOWN 1 — sona

- (cheaply) 2 "Topaz" author
- 3 Take the wheel
- 4 Aachen article
- 5 Computer info 6 Grate
- 33 PC key 7 Place for a watch 34 Formerly
- 8 Invoice fig.
- 9 Sudden plunge
- 10 Bongo, e.g. 11 Nile vipers
- 12 "The Raven"
- 18 Vietnam Veterans Memorial architect
- 21 Blunder
- 24 "Life of Pi"
- director Lee
- 23 Census stat 51 Disco guy on "The Simpsons"
 - 53 Busy insect

26 Couch potato's

summary

30 Buddhist sect

known as

41 Lightheaded

43 Antitoxins

47 Follow

45 "It can't be!"

48 Superhero's

garment

49 Day divs.

39 Early Peruvians

42 2200, to Caesar

31 Gallery display

meal 28 Course

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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CRYPTOQUIP

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APXXFSL PFJ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE PROPERTY OF HAVING FEATURES VERY MUCH SIMILAR TO POET T.S. OR NOVELIST GEORGE: ELIOT-NESS. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals L

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·Stars and Stripes·

Friday, July 12, 2019

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Pro soccer

	IVI	LS								
EASTERN CONFERENCE										
	w	L	т	Pts	GF	GΑ				
Philadelphia	10	5	6	36	39	28				
D.C. United	8	5	7	31	25	21				
Atlanta	9	7	3	30	27	23				
Montreal	9	9	3	30	26	34				
New York City FC		2	8	29	30	20				
New York	8	7	4	28	33	27				
Toronto FC	6	8	5	23	30	33				
New England	6	8	5	23	22	36				
Orlando City	6	9	4	22	27	27				
Chicago	5	8	7	22	31	29				
Columbus	5	13	2	17	17	30				
Cincinnati	4	13	2	14	18	44				
WESTER										
	w	L	т	Pts	GF					
Los Angeles FC	13	7 5	4	43	50	16				
LA Galaxy	11	7	1	34	26	22				
Seattle	9	5	5	32	29	25				
Minnesota United	19	7	3	30	36	29				
FC Dallas	8	Ž	5	29	29	25				

...

36 29 29 25 30 30 28 25 25 29 26 28 29 34 22 31 29 38 29 28 27 26 23 22 20 Houston Real Salt Lake Portland Sporting KC Vancouver 7 9 8 7 8 10 Colorado 5 10 4 19
Note: Three points for vic
point for tie.
Friday's games
New England at D.C. United
Los Angeles FC at Houston
San Jose at LA Galaxy
Columbus at Orlando City
Toronto FC at Montreal 19

San Jose

Cincinnati at Chicago
Cincinnati at Chicago
FC Dallas at Minnesota United
Philadelphia at Real Salt Lake
Sporting Kansas City at Vancouver
Colorado at Portland
Sunday's games
Atlanta at Seattle
New York City FC at New York

New York City FC at New Yor Wednesday, July 17 Houston at Atlanta Vancouver at New England Columbus at Chicago New York at Toronto FC Thursday, July 18 D.C., United at Cincinnati Orlando City at Portland Friday, July 19 Los Angeles FC at LA Galaxy Saturday, July 19

Saturday, July 20 Chicago at Philadelphia Chicago at Philadelphia Houston at Toronto FC Montreal at Columbus FC Dallas at Sporting Kansas City New York City FC at Colorado Minnesota United at Real Salt Lake San Jose at Vancouver

Sun Juse at Vancouver
Sunday, July 21
D.C. United at Atlanta
New England at Cincinnat
New York at Orlando City
Portland at Seattle

W L T Pts GF GA

Reign FC	5	1	5	20	12	9
North Carolina	5	2	4	19	24	12
Portland	5	2	4	19	19	13
Washington	5	3	3	18	17	11
Utah	5	3	2	17	8	7
Chicago	4	5	2	14	17	18
Houston	3	4	4	13	13	18
Orlando	2	8	2	8	12	27
Sky Blue FC	1	7	2	5	8	15
Note: Three	poin	ts	for	vict	ory,	one
noint for tie.						

oint for tie.

Friday, July 5

Houston 5, North Carolina 2

Reign FC 1, Portland 0

Saturday, July 6

Orlando 4, Washington 3

Sky Blue FC 2, Chicago 1 Friday's g Utah at Sky Blue FC Reign FC at North Carolina Chicago at Houston Sunday's games Orlando at Portland Friday, July 19 Portland at Utah

Portland at Utah Saturday, July 20 Houston at Washington Sky Blue FC at Orlando Sunday, July 21 North Carolina at Chicago

Pro football

NFL calendar

Hall of Fame game, Atlanta Aug. 1 — Hall of Fame game, Atlanta vs. Denver, Canton, Ohio. Aug. 3 — Hall of Fame inductions, Can-ton, Ohio. Aug. 8-12 — First preseason weekend. Aug. 29 — Final preseason games. Aug. 31 — Cutdown to 53-player ros-

ter. Sept. 5 — Regular season begins.

Tennis

World TeamTennis GB Pct. New York Orange County Orlando Philadelphia .000 .000 One... Philadelpric San Diego Springfield 0 0 0 Vegas 0 0 Washington 0 0 Sunday's match

Sanningon Sunday's matches
San Diego at New York
Vegas at Orlando
Philadelphia at Springfield
Monday's matches
San Diego at Philadelphia
Vegas at Philadelphia
Vegas day matches
Vegas at New York
Orange County at Orlando
Tuesday's matches
Vegas at New York
Orange County at Philadelphia
San Diego at Wasshington
Orlando at Springfield

Pro basketball

WNBA										
EASTERN CONFERENCE										
Washington Connecticut Chicago New York Indiana Atlanta	9 9 7 7 6	5 6 8 10 10	Pct .643 .600 .467 .467 .375 .286	92 21/2 21/2 4 5						
WESTERN	CONFER			5						
WESTERN	W	-ii	Pct	GE						
Las Vegas Minnesota Phoenix Los Angeles Seattle Dallas	10 9 7 7 8 5	5 6 7 8 9	.667 .600 .538 .500 .500	1 2 2½ 2½ 4½						
Tuesda	ay's gam	es								
Dallas 74, Los A	ngeies 6.	۷								
Wednes	aay s ga	mes								

Wednesday's game-Atlanta 78, Connecticut 75 Phoenix 91, Washington 68 Las Vegas 74, Indiana 71 Minnesota 73, Chicago 72 Thursday's games No games scheduled Friday's games Los Angeles at Indiana Minnesota at Atlanta Minnesota at Atlanta Phoenix at Connecticut New York at Chicago Dallas at Seattle

Deals

Wednesday's transactions

BASEBALL
American League
HOUSTON ASTROS — Sent RHP Joe
nith to Corpus Christi (PCL) for a rehab

assignment.

OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Sent RHP
Jharel Cotton to Stockton (Cal) for a rehab assignment. nao assignment.

SEATTLE MARINERS — Signed RHPs
Michael Limoncelli, Anthony Tomczak
and Dutch Landis to minor league contracts.

tracts.
TEXAS RANGERS — Assigned INF Patrick Wisdom outright to Nashville (PCL).
National League
CINCINNATI REDS — Optioned INF/OF
Josh VanMeter to Louisville (IL).
LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Optioned

1B Matt Beaty to Oklahoma City (PCL) Reinstated SS Corey Seager from the 10

day IL.

MIAMI MARLINS — Sent RHP Tayron
Guerrero and IB Martin Prado to Jupiter
(FSL) for rehab assignments.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Assigned
RHP Deolis Guerra outright to San Anto-

RHP Deolis Guerra outright to San Ántonio (PCL).

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Signed OF
Tommy Jew to a minor league contract.

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association

DALLAS MAYERICKS — Signed 6 Seth
Curry. Re-signed F Maxi Kleber.

LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS — Signed F
Kawhi Leopard.

LOS ANGELES COMMENS — De-Kawhi Leonard.
MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES — De-clined to match Memphis' offer sheet to G Tyus Jones.
OKLAHOMA CITY THUNDER — Traded

Paul George to the L.A. Clippers for G linari and first-round draft picks from 2021-24 and 2026.

PHILADELPHIA 76ERS — Signed Fs To-as Harris and Al Horford.

PHILADELPHIA TOERS — Signed Fs To-bush Harris and Al Hordrod.

Saish Thomas:

OTBALL

NATIONAL FOOTBALL

NA

MOCKEY
Mational Hockey League
LOS ANGELES KINGS — Signed F Alex
lafallo to a two-year contract.
WASHINGTON CAPITALS — Signed F
Aliaksel Protas to a three-year, entrylevel contract.
SOCCER
Mating League Soccer

Major League Soccer NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION -NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION — Ac-quired F Gustavo Bou by transfer from Club Tijuana (Liga MX-Mexico). PHILADELPHIA UNION — Signed coach Jim Curtin to a multi-year contract ex-

tension.

Cycling

Tour de France

Tour de France
Wednesday
Colmar, France
Fifth Stage
A 135-S-tiene Fifth Stage
A 135-S-tiene Fifth Stage
Reserves and Stage Stage
A 135-S-tiene Fifth Stage
Reserves and Stage
A 135-S-tiene Fifth Stage
Reserves and Stage
A 135-S-tiene Fifth Stage
A 135-S

rida, same time. 5. Greg Van Avermaet, Belgium, CCC,

6. Julien Simon, France, Cofidis, same

Michael Matthews, Australia, Sun-8. Nils Politt, Germany, Katusha Alpe-

8. Nils Politt, Germany, Katusha Alpe-cin, same times Stuyen, Belgium, Trek-Segafredo, same kime, France, Deceun-inck-QuickStep, same time. 11. Xandro Meurisse, Belgium, Wanty-Gobert, same time. 12. Edvald Boasson Hagen, Norway, Di-

ion Data, same tim

13. Alberto Bettiol, Italy, EF Education First, same time. 14. Guillaume Martin, France, Wanty-

Gobert, same time. 15. Alexey Lutsenko, Kazakhstan, As-tana, same time. 16. Omar Fraile, Spain, Astana, same

time. 17. Fabio Felline, Italy, Trek-Segafredo, 18. David Gaudu, France, Groupama-18. David Gaudu, France, Groupama-FDJ, Same time.
19. Warren Barguil, France, Arkea-Samsic, same time.
20. Daryl Impey, South Africa, Mitchelton-Scott, same time.

n-Scott, same time. Also 30. Joey Rosskopf, United States, CCC,

30. Bey Months and States, EF Education First, same time.
92. Ben King, United States, Dimension Data, 8:16. 148. Chad Haga, United States, Sunweb. 16:58.

web, 16:58.

Overall Standings
(After five stages)

1. Julian Alaphilippe, France, Deceuninck-QuickStep, 18:44:12.

2. Wout Van Aert, Belgium, Jumbo-

 Wout Van Aert, Belgium, Jumbo-Visma, :14.
 Steven Kruijswijk, Netherlands, Jumbo-Visma, :25.
 4. George Bennett, New Zealand, Jumbo-Visma, same time.
5. Michael Matthews, Australia, Sun-

6. Egan Bernal, Colombia, Ineos, same ne. 7. Geraint Thomas, Britain, Ineos, :45. 8. Enric Mas, Spain, Deceuninck

o. Enric Mas, Spain, Deceuninck-QuickStep,:46. 9. Peter Sagan, Slovakia, Bora-Hans-grohe:50 e, 150. . Greg Van Avermaet, Belgium, CCC,

:51 l. 11. Michael Woods, Canada, EF Educa-Michael Woods, Canada, EF Education First, same time.
 Wilco Kelderman, Netherlands, Sunweb, same time.
 Thibaut Pinot, France, Groupama-

auon First, :53.

15. Tejay Van Garderen, United States, EF Education First, same time.

16. Sonny Colbrelli, Italy, Bahrain-Merida, :56.

a, :50. 17. Matteo Trentin, Italy, Mitchelton-Scott, :57. 18. David Gaudu, France, Groupama-

18. David Gaudu, France, Groupama-FDJ, same time. 19. Rudy Molard, France, Groupama-FDJ, same time. 20. Nicolas Roche, Ireland, Sunweb, 1:00.

72. Joey Rosskopf, United States, CCC, 72. Joey Rosskopf, United States, CCC, 5:52. 103. Ben King, United States, Dimen-sion Data, 23:25. 174. Chad Haga, United States, Sun-web, 39:51.

AP sportlight

July 12 The Boston Red Sox wins his 300th game with a 5-3 victory over the Philadelphia A; 5-4 victory over the Philadelphia A; 5-4 victory of the Philadelphia A; 5-4 victory over the Philadelphia

dereating Nuth Jessen by two strokes in 1970 – Jack Nicklaus wins his second British Open, beating boug Sanders by 1970 – Jack Nicklaus wins his second to the first playoff at The Open since 1953 1975 – Tom Watson wins an 18-hole playoff by one stroke over Jack Newton 1976 – Tom Watson wins an 18-hole playoff by one stroke over Jack Newton Off Links in Socialand. 1989 – Mary Decker has her fourth setting an American mark in the 1,500-meter run with a time of 4:01.17 at an international meet at Stuttgars.

Auto racing

Monster Energy NASCAR Cup schedule and winners

SCINEGUIE and Winners
Sunday, Feb. 10 - x4dyunce Auto Parts
Clash, Dayfona Beach, Fla. (Jimmie Johnson)
Thursday, Feb. 14 - C. Deul I do Dayfona,
Dayfona Beach, Fla. (Jimmie Johnson)
Agyfona Beach, Fla. (Day Logana)
Agyfona Beach, Fla. (Day Logana)
Beach, Fla. (Den Logan

Sunday, March 3 – Pennzoil 400, Las Vegas Goys Logan, 10 a – TickeGuardian 500, Avondale, Ariz, (Xiyle Busch) 1 – Alber Guardian 500, Avondale, Ariz, (Xiyle Busch) 1 – Auto Club 400, Fontana, Calif. (Xiyle Busch) 5TD 500, Martinsville, Va. (Brad Keselovski) Sunday, March 31 – O'Reilly Auto Parts 500, Fort Worth, Iroas (Denny Hard) 500, Britcol, Cent. (Xiyle Busch) Food City 500, Britcol, Tenn. (Xiyle Busch) Food City 500, Britcol, Tenn. (Xiyle Busch) Food City 500, Britcol, Alac (Mase Ellina) — Getos 500, Talladega, Ala. (Chase Ellina) — Getos 500, Talladega, Ala. (Chase Ellina) — Getos 500, Talladega, Ala. (Chase Ellina) — Getos 500, Talladega

Ala. (Chase Elliott)

Monday, May 6 — Gander RV 400, Dover,
Del (Martin Truey Ir.)

Monday, May 6 – Gander RY 400, Dover, 10-10 (Martin Trust) 1 – Digital Ally 400, Edit (Martin Trust) 1 – Digital Ally 400, Kansas City, Kan, Grad Keselowski) Saturday, May 18 – xMonster Energy Open, Concord, N.C. (Kyle Larson) Open, Concord, N.C. (Kyle Larson) Open, Concord, N.C. (Kyle Larson) Sunday, May 26 – Coca-Cola 600, Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Open, Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Open, Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Open, College Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Open, Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Open, Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Open, Concord, N.C. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Sunday, June 30 – Camping World 400, Grooklyn, Mich. (Lovy, Logano) Collegt, Ill. (Alles Bowman) Open, Concording World 400, Grooklyn, Martin College, Ill. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Sunday, June 30 – Camping World 400, Ill. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Sunday, June 30 – Camping World 400, Ill. (Martin Trucx Ir.) Sunday, June 30 – Canb Zero Sugar 400 (ustin Haley) 7

Saturday, July 13 — Quaker State 400,

Satthuay, July 21 — Foxwoods Resort Ca-sino 301, Loudon, N.H. Sunday, July 28 — Gander RV 400, Long

Pond, Pa.
Sunday, Aug. 4 — Go Bowling at The
Glen, Watkins Glen, N.Y.
Sunday, Aug. 11 — Consumers Energy
400, Brooklyn, Mich.
Saturday, Aug. 17 — Bass Pro Shops NRA
Night Race, Bristol, Tenn.
Sunday, Sept. 1 — Bogangles' Southern

Sunday, Sept. 1 — Buganges Southern 500, Darlington, S.C. Sunday, Sept. 8 — Big Machine Vodka 400 at the Brickyard, Indianapolis Sunday, Sept. 15 — South Point 400, Las

Yegas
Saturday, Sept. 21 — Federated Auto
Parts 400, Richmond, Va.
Sunday, Sept. 29 — Bank of American
ROVAL 400, Concord, N.C.
Sunday, Oct. 6 — MENCS race, Dover, Sunday, Oct. 13 — 1000Bulbs.com 500, Talladega, Ala.

Talladega, Ala. 20 — Hollywood Casino 400, Sunday, Oct. 20 — Hollywood Casino 400, Kansas City, Kan. Sunday, Oct. 27 — First Data 500, Mar-Sunday, Nov. 3 — AAA Texas 500, Fort

Sunday, Nov. 10 — MENCS race, Avondale, Ariz. dale, Ariz.

Sunday, Nov. 17 — Ford EcoBoost 400,
Homestead, Fla.

X-non-points race

NASCAR Xfinity Series schedule and winners

Saturday, Feb. 16 — NASCAR Racing Ex perience 300, Daytona Beach, Fla. (Michae Annett)

perience 300, Daytona Beach, Fla, (Michael Saturday, Feb. 22 – Rinnai 250, Hampton, Ga. (Christopher Bell) Boyd Gaming 300, Las Vegas (Kyb Busch) — RiQ Service Dog Oo, Avondia, Aur. (Kyb Busch) — Saturday, March 9 — IKB Service Dog Oo, Avondia, Aur. (Kyb Busch) — Saturday, March 9 — My Bardar Csolusance Group 300, Fentana, Calif. (Cole Custer) — Saturday, March 9 — My Bardar Csolusance Group 300, Fentana, Calif. (Cole Custer) — Alsco 300, Briston, Christopher Bell) — Care Christopher Bell — Saturday, April 5 — Alsco 300, Briston, Christopher Bell — Saturday, May 4 — Allied Steel Buildings — Oo, Dover, Del. (Christopher Bell) — Saturday, May 4 — Allied Steel Buildings — Saturday, May 4 — Allied Steel Buildings — Saturday, May 4 — Allied Steel Buildings — Saturday, May 5 — Alsco 300, Concord. — Saturday, May 25 — Alsco 300, Concord. — Saturday, June 1 — Pocono Green 250, Saturday, June 1 — Pocono Green 250,

N.C. (Tyler Reddick)
Saturday, June 1 — Pocono Green 250,
Long Pond, Pa. (Cole Custer)
Saturday, June 8 — Cole Custer)
B. Saturday, June 8 — Circuitcity.com 250,
Newton, Iowa (Christopher Bell)
Saturday, June 15 — Circuitcity.com 250,
Newton, Iowa (Christopher Bell)
Saturday, June 25 — Camping World 300,
Joliet, Ill. (Cole Custer)

lilet, III. (Cole Custer)
Friday, July 5 — Circle K Firecracker 250,
aytona Beach, Fla. (Ross Chastain)
Friday, July 12 — Alsco 300, Sparta, Ky.
Saturday, July 20 — Lakes Region 200,
Judon, N.H.
Saturday, July 27 — U.S. Cellular 250,

Newton, Iowa Saturday, Aug. 3 — Zippo 200 at The Glen, Watkins Glen, N.Y. Saturday, Aug. 10 — B&L Transport 170 at Mid-Ohio, Lexington, Ohio Friday, Aug. 16 — Food City 300, Bristol,

Tenn.

Saturday, Aug. 24 — CTECH Manufacturing 180, Elkhart Lake, Wis.

Saturday, Aug. 31 — Sport Clips Haircuts
VFW 200, Darlington, S.C.

Saturday, Sept. 7 — Indiana 250, India-

Τe

Saturday Sont 14 - D.C. Solar 300 Las gas Friday, Sept. 20 — GoBowling 250, Rich-

mond, Vá.
Saturday, Sept. 28 — Drive for the Cure Saturday, Oct. 5 – NXS race, Dover, Del. Saturday, Oct. 5 – NXS race, Dover, Del. Saturday, Oct. 19 – Kansas Lottery 300, Kansas City, Kan. Saturday, Nov. 2 - O'Reilly Auto Parts

NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck schedule and winners

Friday, Feb. 15 — NextEra Energy 250, Daytona Beach, Fla. (Austin Hill) Saturday, Feb. 23 — Atlanta 200, Hamp-ton, Ga. (Kyle Busch) Friday, March 1 — Strat 200, Las Vegas Friday, Marth 1 - Communication (Kyle Busch)
Saturday, March 23 - TruNorth Global
S0, Martinsville, Va. (Kyle Busch)
Friday, March 29 - Vankor 350, Fort
Worth, Texas (Kyle Busch)
Friday, May 3 - JEGS 200, Dover, Del.
Frida ohnny Sauter)
Friday, May 10 — Digital Ally 250, Kansas ty, Kan. (Ross Chastain)
Friday, May 17 — North Carolina Educa-on Lottery 200, Concord, N.C. (Kyle Busch)

tion Lottery 200, Concord, N.C. (Kyle Busch)
Friday, June 7 – Speedy Cash.com 400,
Fort Worth, Texas (Greg Birtis)
Own Gret Worth, Texas (Greg Birtis)
Was (Gret Morth)
Saturday, June 22 – Carshield 200, Madson, III, (Ross Chastlan)
Canping Word 225,
Joliet, III, Grett Moffiti)
Thursday, July 11 – Buscle Up In Your
Truck 225, Sparta, Ny.
Ond Pan. 200, Long

Ros

ond, Pa.
Thursday, Aug. 1 — Eldora Dirt Derby,
tossburg, Ohio
Saturday, Aug. 10 — Corrigan Oil 200,
trooklyn, Mich.
Thursday, Aug. 15 — UNOH 200, Bristol, Dr Thursday, Aug. 15 — UNOH 200, Bristol, Tenn.
Sunday, Aug. 25 — Chevrolet Silverado 250, Bowmanville, Ontario Friday, Sept. 13 — World of Westgate 200, Las Vegas

Saturday, Oct. 12 — Sugarlands Shine 250, Talladega, Ala. Saturday, Oct. 26 — NGOTS race, Mar-

Friday, Nov. 8 — Lucas Oil 150, Avondale,

Friday, Nov. 15 — Ford EcoBoost 200, mestead, Fla.

IndyCar schedule and winners

March 10 - Firestone Grand Prix of St. tersburg (Josef Newgarden) March 24 - IndyCar Classic, Austin, Tex-(Colton Herta) April 7 - Honda Indy Grand Prix of Ala-ma, Birmingham (Takuma Sato) ıma, Birmingham (Taküma Sato)
April 14 — Acura Grand Prix of Long
sach, Calif. (Alexander Rossi)
May 11 — IndyCar Grand Prix, Indianapo(Simon Pagenaud)
May 26 — Indianapolis 500 (Simon Pagend)

June 1 - Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix-

Race 1 (Josef Newgarden)

June 2 — Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix-June 2 — Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix-Race 2 (Scott Dixon)
June 8 — DXC Technology 600, Fort Worth,

Texas (Josef Newgarden)
June 23 — REV Group Grand Prix, Elkhart
Lake, Wis. (Alexander Rossi)
July 14 — Honda Indy Toronto

July 26 — Honda Indy Loronto
July 20 — lowa Corn 300, Newton
July 28 — Honda Indy 200 at Mid-Ohio,
Lexington, Ohio
Aug. 18 — ABC Supply 500, Long Pond,

Aug. 24 — Bommarito Automotive Group 500, Madison, III. Sept. 1 — Grand Prix of Portland (Ore.)
Sept. 22 — Firestone Grand Prix of Monterey, Salinas, Calif.

Formula One schedule and winners

Scheduler and Williers

March 17 — Australian Grand Prix, Melbourne (Valtteri Bottas)

March 31 — Bahrain Grand Prix, Sakhir
(Lewis Hamilton)

April 14 — Chinese Grand Prix, Beijing
(Lewis Hamilton)

April 28 — Azerbaijan Grand Prix, Baku
(Valtteri Botta)

(Valtteri Botta)

Grand Prix, Barcelona

(Valtteri Botta)

(Valtteri Botta)

Grand Prix, Barcelona

(Valtteri Botta)

milton) ewis Hamilton)

May 26 — Monaco Grand Prix, Monte
irlo (Lewis Hamilton)

June 9 — Canadian Grand Prix, Montreal
ewis Hamilton)

ewis Hamilton) June 23 — French Grand Prix, Le Castellet ewis Hamilton) (10 ewis Hamilton)

June 30 — Austrian Grand Prix, Spielberg
lax Verstappen)

July 14 — British Grand Prix, Silverstone, (Max

England July 28 - German Grand Prix, Hocken ım **Aug. 4** — Hungarian Grand Prix, Buda-

st Sept. 1 — Belgian Grand Prix, Spa-Fran-

rchamps
Sept. 8 — Italian Grand Prix, Monza
Sept. 22 — Singapore Grand Prix
Sept. 29 — Russian Grand Prix, Sochi
Oct. 13 — Japanese Grand Prix, Suzuka
Oct. 27 — Mexican Grand Prix, Mexico y Nov. 3 — United States Grand Prix, Austin,

Nov. 17 — Brazilian Grand Prix, Sao Paolo Dec. 1 — Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Yas Ma-rina, UAE

GOLF/COLLEGE BASKETBALL/NHL

Charging rookie headlines Deere

Wolff, 20, already has PGA victory

By LUKE MEREDITH
Associated Press

Matthew Wolff made a name for himself by winning the 3M Open in his fourth PGA Tour start after turning pro.

The 20-year-old who starred at Oklahoma State will try to make it two in a row this weekend at the John Deere Classic in Silvis, Ill..

Wolff was the tour's youngest winner since Jordan Spieth won at TPC Deere Run at age 19 in 2013. And like Spieth, he's being hyped as a future star as he arrives in the Quad Cities.

Many of the world's best players are either taking the week off or playing the Scottish Open in preparation for next week's British Open. That makes Wolff as good a bet as any to make a run at the title at a venue known for low scores.

"My caddie kind of told me that this course is a little bit like last week, just the driving aspect and kind of the way it sets up," Wolff said. "I played it for the Monday pro-am, and I kind of realized that it was more of a course that suited my eye pretty well and I like the look of it."

Wolff's victory last week at TPC Twin Cities took care of a lot: It earned him instant membership and a two-year exemption on the PGA Tour and invitations to next year's Masters and PGA Championship. But it didn't get him a spot in the field at the Britian Open. That, too, is a possibility this week: The top finisher not already exempt who finishes in the top 5 at TPC Deere Run will qualify to play next week at Royal Portrush — and get a seat on the charter flight that the John Deere Classic provides to players making the trip to Northern Ireland.

If he doesn't get there this year, there appear to be plenty of major championship starts in the future for Wolff, who has always shown huge potential.

Wolff, who grew up in Southern California, earned freshman All-America honors for the Cowboys in 2017-18 before winning the NCAA individual title in May. After missing the cut at the Rockst Mortgage Classic, Wolff shot 62-65 over the weekend at the 3M Open, securing the win with a 25-foot put for eagle from the collar of the 18th green.

That made him the seventh player in the past 80 years to win a PGA Tour event before turning 21, and the other six — Spieth, Tiger Wooks, Seve Ballesteros, Phil Mickelson, Raymond Floyd and Rory McIlroy — went on to win multiple majors.

Wolff and his assistant Cole Spradlin rented a van and drove straight from Minnesota to the Quad Cities, arriving around 2:30 a.m. Monday.

"It's a dream come true. I'll say that over and over again. My life changed as soon as that putt went in," Wolff said. "But it only lasts so long, and my goal is to become the No. 1 player in the world."

He's now 135th, but that figures to change soon, too.

The John Deere Classic has long made up for its lack of star

I feel

that I

confident

in myself.

can play.

Whenever

the Devils

want me

to. It's up

to them.



Rookie Matthew Wolff putts for eagle on the 18th hole Sunday during the final round of the 3M Open in Blaine, Minn. Wolff, 20, won the tournament and became the PGA Tour's youngest winner since Jordan Soieth won at TPC Deere Run at age 19 in 2013.

power by using sponsor exemptions to lure some of the game's brightest prospects to its event.

This year's newcomers will include Cal's Collin Morikawa, who finished one shot behind Wolff in Minnesota. Morikawa's performance earned him special temporary membership on the PGA Tour, meaning he can use unlimited sponsor exemptions in a bid to earn his tour card for next season.

Morikawa, who'll be making his fifth career start, will be joined by fellow rookies Viktor Hovland and Justin Suh.

"Obviously the goal coming into this summer was to earn a full card for next year," Morikawa said. "We're almost there."

One player who doesn't come in with much momentum is defending champion Michael Kim.

After winning at TPC Deere Run by eight shots, matching the largest margin of victory on tour in 2018, Kim began working on swing changes with coach John Tillery and has missed 17 cuts in a row.

NCAA charges NC State

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C.—The NCAA has charged North Carolina State with four violations, accusing a former assistant coach of providing payments and benefits connected to the recruitment of one-and-done basketball player Dennis Smith Jr.

The school said Wednesday that its notice of allegations was received Tuesday, and now has 90 days to respond.

The notice includes four serious charges, with two that are potential top-level charges. The NCAA alleges that from 2014-17, former assistant Orlando Early provided Smith and his associates approximately \$46,700 in impermissible inducements and benefits — including \$40,000 that a government witness testified he delivered to Early intended for Smith's family in 2015.

The NCAA also said former coach Mark Gottfried, now coaching at Cal State Northridge, was "presumed responsible and "did not demonstrate" that he monitored Early for compliance. It also accuses Gottfried of failing to monitor the program's pailst, leading to a total 164 impermissible complimentary admissions to games.

The notice indicates the NCAA's hearing panel could levy show-cause penalties against both Gottfried and Early.

The Wolfpack went 15-17 during Smith's one season on the team in 2016-17, and the school fired Gottfried late during that season. Smith, a point guard with the New York Knicks, is entering his third season in the NBA.

Scott Tompsett, a Kansas Citybased attorney who represends Gottfried along with Raleigh's Elliot Abrams, said in a statement Wednesday night that his client is disappointed that the allegations have been brought against N.C. State and takes them seriously.

"While we disagree with the enforcement staff's position that Coach Gottfried did not adequately monitor certain aspects of his program, we are pleased that the NCAA agrees that he was not involved in any illicit payments," Tompsett said.

Cal State Northridge spokesman Nick Bocanegra issued a statement on behalf of the school saying it is aware of N.C. State's notice and that Gottfried told school officials that he was not involved in, or had knowledge of, any NCAA rules violations condition of his employment.

The notice came roughly a month after a key NCAA official said six schools could face allegations of Level I violations as part of the fallout in the college basketball corruption scandal. Stan Wilcox, vice president for regulatory affairs for the NCAA, said two high-profile programs would be notified in early July, the others at a later date.

With Hughes in Devils camp, Smith overlooked

By Tom Canavan Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — With Jack Hughes in the New Jersey Devils' development camp, it's easy to overlook Tv Smith.

Hughes was the No. 1 overall selection in the draft last month and much is expected of the playmaking center. It's almost certain he will be on the Devils' roster when the regular season opens in October and the packed crowd at the team's training rink in the Prudential Center roared on Wednesday when he was introduced before a four-team, 3-on-3 competition.

Much like the other three dozen young players at the weeklong gathering, the 19-year-old Smith received polite applause.

What people tend to forget is Smith was the Devils' first-round pick a year ago — 17th overall — and he nearly made the roster after a tremendous training camp.

A year later, Smith may be ready to take that next step. The puck-moving defenseman has added about 8 pounds since last year and is coming off a great season in the Western Hockey League. He had seven goals and a career-hielh 62 assists, the second-highest single-season total in league history.

Devils coach John Hynes said Smith appears to have matured in the past year, noting his body is thicker and he

looks fit.
"He is not

"He is not a wide-eyed kid here that is taking everything in for the first time." Hynes said of the WHL defenseman of the vear. "It's the second time he is coming into the culture of what we are doing He sees the needs and knows what you are talking about. He seems a lot more confident. I don't want to say on a mission. but he seems a little more focused as opposed to taking everything in for the

Ty Smith focused as a ing everyth defenseman first time."

Hynes expects Smith to be a motivated player when training camp starts in September.

Smith will be trying to break into a veteran defensive unit. It's led by captain Andy Greene and recently acquired Norris Trophy winner P.K. Subban. Sami Vatanen, Damon Severson, Will Butcher, Mirco Mueller and Connor Carrick are returning from last season's team.

Despite being a little bigger and stronger, Smith doesn't believe he has lost any quickness or agility.

"I like to get the puck and give the puck to the forwards," Smith said. "My dad always tells me 'Get the puck to the skill and then support it.' They'll make the play and then join the rush in the second wave and create offense."

Smith refuses to speculate when he will play in the NHL. He saw action in the preseason last season and was sent back for another year of junior hockey, helping the Spokane Chiefs get to the semifinals of the WHL playoffs.

"I feel confident in myself, that I can play," he said. "Whenever the Devils want me to. It's up to them. I have to be the best I can possibly be and come out and compete, compete for a job. It's not easy to make the NHL. It's up to them."

Notes: Hughes' team won the 3-on-3 competition, posting a 1-0 win over a squad that included Joey Anderson, his roommate for the camp and a player who saw some time with the Devils last season.

SOCCER



ICHARD DREW/AP

Portraits of the USA women's soccer team members are visible in the windows of a building on Fifth Avenue in New York last month. In the wake of the Americans' record-setting fourth World Cup title, the hard part remains ahead: the weekly work of boosting the National Women's Soccer League.

Can the Cup win runneth over to the NWSL?

Women's pro soccer league tries to capitalize on Americans' success in the World Cup

By Ronald Blum Associated Press

Megan Rapinoe, the lavender-haired icon of women's soccer, maintains that green is the key to her sport's sustainability.

"For me, it's about the Benjis," she said. Women's soccer engages the U.S. every four years, then disappears for most fans like a comet leaving the solar system. In the wake of the Americans' record-setting fourth World Cup title Sunday, the hard part remains: the weekly work of boosting the National Women's Soccer League, where average attendance remains at a minor league level.

Fans have not handed over a sufficient supply of \$100 bills displaying Benjamin Franklin's portrait, and sponsors and broadcasters have not made enough of the six, seven- and eight-figure agreements needed for the NWSL to rise to the level of men's Major League Soccer.

"On the men's side in MLS, they have owners with extremely deep pockets," defender Crystal Dunn said. "If the women's game is going to grow, it's going to come down to us not kind of penny-pinching on things and really putting a lot of resources in"

The Women's United Soccer Association, launched as the first fully professional women's league, folded in 2003 after just three seasons. Women's Professional Soccer started play in 2009 and also lasted only three seasons.

NWSL took the field in 2013 and has a management contract with the U.S. Soccer Federation, which has listed nearly ⁴ I don't think any of us involved in the NWSL thought this was going to be an easy journey in establishing a viable women's league.?

Mike Golub

president of business for the Portland Timbers and Portland Thorns

\$8.5 million as expenses attributable to the league. The USSF pays the salaries of 22 allocated national team players, providing the NWSL a subsidy and the ability to market the top American players.

NWSL launched in 2013 with eight teams, increased to nine the following season and 10 in 2016, then went back to nine in 2018 — of which four share owners with

"When the league started, no one expected the league to survive seven seasons," Utah Royals coach Laura Harvey said. "I think the biggest battle has already been overcome a little bit in the U.S. that a lot of women's soccer faces across the world, is that people are willing to pay a ticket price to watch a game."

MLS, which started with 10 teams in 1996, expanded, contracted and now has grown to 24 teams this season, with plans to expand to 30. MLS average attendance has risen from the 14,000 range at the turn of the century to about 22,000; the NWSL is between 5,000 to 6,000.

"The MLS, it's well documented, had its share of growing pains when it was still a toddler and a youth, if you will. So, I don't think any of us involved in the NWSL thought this was going to be an easy journey in establishing a viable women's league," said Mike Golub, president of business for MLS's Portland Timbers and the NWSL'S Thorns, who lead the league

with an 18,000-plus attendance average. Just a handful of NWSL games were televised nationally from 2013-16, but the league announced a deal with A&E Networks ahead of the 2017 season in which the company would take an equity stake and broadcast a game of the week on Lifetime. But A&E cut short the deal last winter, a season early, and it took NWSL until last week to announce an agreement for ESPN to televise 14 games during the season's second half.

NWSL's staff is small. The league had three to five full-time employees when it started and now has 13, including five in its media office. The goal is to grow teams and staff

"Not expansion just to expand," said Amanda Duffy, who is in her third season running the NWSL office and in her first year as league president. "It's expansion to get right with the right ownership, with the right facilities, the right market, the right infrastructure and the right ability to connect with the community and resonating in a market. And if we get that right, that will also at the same time broaden our footprint, broaden the relevancy."

NWSL announced a sponsorship agreement Sunday with Anheuser Busch Cos. Inc.'s Budweiser, a deal negotiated by MLS's marketing wing Soccer United Marketing.

"We identified the fact that there is a national and global attention one month out of every 48 months, and if we really, truly want to act like supporters, if we really, truly want to grow the sport, it's got to be day-in, day-out, I mean during the actual season," said Monica Rustgi, Budweiser's vice president of marketing. "It's also to use our scale and reach to get more people into the fold and more sponsors into the

Budweiser joined a relatively small group of NWSL national sponsors that includes Nike, Lifetime, Spectrum Brands Holdings Inc.'s Cutter insect repellant and Thorne Research Inc., which manufactures nutritional supplements.

"I think for national sponsorships, that's a process that takes time," Duffy said. "I think right now the larger and broader opportunities from a sponsorship perspective are going to be more at a local level, where there's an immediate connection with the NWSL players and the brand at a local scale in those markets."

Dubon took road less traveled to majors

Brewers shortstop overcame hardships to be majors' 1st Honduran born-and-raised player

By Jake Seiner Associated Press

In so many ways, Mauricio Dubon's ascent to the big leagues has been unusual.

Point No. 1 is simple: No major league player has ever been bornand-raised in Honduras. On Sunday, the 24-year-old Milwaukee Brewers prospect became the

The rest is more complicated. It's a matter of perspectives, and Dubon has had many.

Minor league baseball is a system marked by vast inequality, and Dubon has experienced it from all sides.

"I'm blessed," he told The Associated Press during spring training in Phoenix.

His journey to the U.S. was started by a chaperone for a Christian mission group that was donating baseball equipment in Honduras. Dubon was 15 when he met Andy Ritchey, who was struck by the youngster's strong arm and fast feet. A few days after their first meeting, Dubon was on a plane, ready to start a new life with the Ritchey family in Sacramento, Calif.

in Sacramento, Cam.
That was the first major stroke of luck for Dubon, but it also presented a most difficult challenge. Suddenly and unexpectedly, he was in a foreign country, removed from everyone in his life to that point. Though he knew some English, language was still an issue. But the homesickness is what left him crying each night.

Dubon told himself it would be worth it if it meant a chance at an American baseball career. The Boston Red Sox made that dream a reality, selecting Dubon in the 26th round of the 2013 draft.

Dubon turned 19 that summer, and after signing his contract, he played out the season with the club's rookie-level Gulf Coast League affiliate. The transition to pro ball was also jarring for for some teammates. The team housed players in a hotel near its complex in Fort Myers, Fla., and Dubon saw many players fighting the same homesickness he experienced moving to Sacramento.

"They'd never been away from their parents until then," he said. "Going there and struggling and everything, it's a little overwhelming."

Players in the minor leagues are responsible for their own equipment, and buying gloves and bats can be difficult for players making as little as \$3,300 per season. Some are lucky enough to get hefty signing bonuses that cover those costs. Others might get help from their agent. Dubon had neither.

His older brother bought him six wood bats, and at first, Dubon was hesitant to use them against hard-throwing pitchers for fear of breaking one.

For the rest, he and his team-

By the numbers

772

The number of players taken before the Boston Red Sox drafted Mauricio Dubon 773rd in the 26th round of the 2013 draft.

\$13

The amount Dubon paid for his cleats in his first season in the minor leagues.

.307

Dubon's average through 83 games with the San Antonio Missions, before being called up Sunday. He also had 14 homers and nine stolen bases.

SOURCE: Associated Press

mates used to go to a Ross department store. He remembers buying cleats for \$13 and trying to make them last until season's end.

"That's the type of stuff I had to do to be where I am right now," Dubon said. "It's not good at all. But, I mean, you're just trying to save and make my money last."

Dubon struggled that first year, batting .245 with six errors in 20 games. He showed more promise the next year, hitting .320 in short-season ball, and that sent him into the 2015 season hopeful for a starting job with Class A Greenville.

That spring, Dubon made two of his now-closest friends in base-ball. The first was Rafael Devers, a slugger who had signed out of the Dominican Republic for a \$1.5 million bonus. The other was Yoan Moncada, a generational talent from Cuba who got \$31.5 million from Boston, which also paid a 100% tax to Major League Baseball for surpassing international spending limits.

Dubon became instrumental to the development of those young players, both of whom are now starring in the majors. For Devers, Moncada and other Latin players, he became a go-to translator. It helped around the clubhouse, and it really helped outside it — like when the group made its near-nightly burrito runs to Moc's.



KEITH SRAKOCIC/A

Milwaukee shortstop Mauricio Dubon is the first Honduran born-and-raised player in the majors.

"He had a connecting personality," then-Greenville coach Darren Fenster said. "He was a glue guy in our clubhouse and on the field"

Dubon, Devers, Moncada and three other players rented an apartment together in Greenville for the 2015 season — despite the disparity in their signing bonuses, Dubon insisted on paying an equal share. Occasionally — and always on the sly — Devers or Moncada would pick up a restaurant bill or some other expense, a quiet gesture that helped Dubon

and other teammates get by.
On the field, everything clicked. Dubon hit .301 and stole 18 bases in half a season, then got promoted to high-A Salem. His pay was still meager, but by that

point, he had been picked up by a major agency that was sending him high-end equipment.

The next year, Boston traded Dubon to Milwaukee, and he continued to blossom in the Brewers' system. He batted .343 in 27 games with Triple-A Colorado Springs last year before tearing his ACL.

A year later, he returned to Triple-A, where he was batting .307 with a career-high 14 homers. He has been on the 40-man roster the past two seasons, meaning he got at least the MLB-mandated \$44,500 per year.

He's a bit of a celebrity when he goes home, and he thinks his ascent is helping grow the game

"It's changing a little bit for the

good," he said. "It's slowly, but it's going in a good direction right now." He also hasn't forgotten his

He also hasn't forgotten his days in \$13 cleats. Although he's not out campaigning for better minor league pay, he's eager to see that change.

"I mean, why not?" Dubon said. "This is a hard job. It's a hard job. It's a hard job. the hard job. Those guys deserve better than what they get right now. I'm blessed enough to be on the 40-man now, I make decent money now, but still, some of the guys, like I see some of the guys don't even eat, just trying to save money.

"Skipping meals just to try to get money and everything. It would be good to get a raise for guys like that."



Home plate umpire Brian deBrauwere, taps on his earpiece as Liberty Division's Tyler Ladendorf, right, of the High Point Rockers, waits for a pitch from Freedom Division's Mitch Atkins, of the York Revolution, during the first inning of the Atlantic League All-Star minor league game Wednesday in York, Pa. Also seen is catcher James Skelton, center, of the York Revolution. DeBrauwere wore the earpiece connected to an iPhone, which relayed ball and strike calls upon receiving it from a computer system that uses Doppler radar. The independent Atlantic League became the first American professional baseball league to let a computer call balls and strikes.

'Robot umpires' make professional debut

Atlantic League first to use computer system with Doppler to determine balls and strikes

By Rob Maaddi Associated Press

YORK, Pa. - "Robot umpires" have

arrived. The independent Atlantic League became the first American professional baseball league to let a computer call balls and strikes Wednesday night at its All-Star Game. Plate umpire Brian deBrauwere wore an earpiece connected to an iPhone in his pocket and relayed the call upon receiving it from a TrackMan computer system that uses Doppler radar.

He crouched in his normal position behind the catcher and signaled balls and strike

"Until we can trust this system 100 percent, I still have to go back there with the intention of getting a pitch correct because if the system fails, it doesn't pick a pitch up or if it registers a pitch that's a foot-and-ahalf off the plate as a strike, I have to be prepared to correct that," deBrauwere said before the game.

It didn't appear deBrauwere had any delay receiving the calls at first but players noticed a big difference.

"One time I already had caught the ball back from the catcher and he signaled strike," said pitcher Daryl Thompson, who didn't realize the technology was being used until after he disagreed with a call.

Infielder L.J. Mazzilli said a few times hitters who struck out lingered an extra second or so in the batter's box waiting on a called third strike.

"The future is crazy but it's cool to see



Home plate umpire Brian deBrauwere checks an iPhone used to relay computer calls to him during the Atlantic League All-Star game Wednesday. Umpires have the ability to override the computer calls.

the direction of baseball," Mazzilli said. The umpires have the ability to over-

ride the computer, which considers a pitch a strike when the ball bounces and then crosses the zone. TrackMan also does not evaluate check swings.

Former big leaguer Kirk Nieuwenhuis doesn't like the idea of giving umps veto

"If the umpire still has discretion, it defeats the purpose," said Nieuwenhuis, who batted .221 with 31 homers in 978 at-bats with the Mets, Angels and Brewers.

About 45 minutes before first pitch, the public address announcer directed fans to look up at the black screen hanging off the face of the upper level behind the plate and joked they could blame the computer for any disagreements over calls.

This is an exciting night for MLB, the Atlantic League, baseball generally," said Morgan Sword, MLB's senior vice president of economics and operations, "This idea has been around for a long time and it's the first time it's been brought to life in

a comprehensive way."

The experiment with radar-tracking technology to call balls and strikes was originally expected to begin at the start of the season but experienced some delays.

Atlantic League President Rick White said it's going to be implemented leaguewide over the next few weeks.

"After that, we're relatively confident that's it's going to spread through organized baseball," White said. "We're very excited about what this portends not only for our league but for the future of baseball. What we know is technology can help umpires be more accurate and we're committed to that. We think the Atlantic League is being a pioneer for all of the sport.

Sword said MLB hasn't received much pushback from umpires.

"One of our focuses is not to replace the umpire," Sword said. "In fact, we're trying empower the umpire with technology. The home plate umpire has a lot more to do than call balls and strikes and he's going to be asked to do all of that. We're in touch with our umpires union and this is the first step of the process.

DeBrauwere had no issue with it.

"This is just another plate job and I just get a little help on this one so I feel very relaxed going into this one," he said.

Strike zones are determined according to the average for players of that height unless there's already information on a player's particular strike zone if they've played in the majors at some point.

Pitcher Mitch Atkins noticed pitches higher in the strike zone were called.

"Technically, they're strikes but um-pires never called them," Atkins said.

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said

there's no timeline on when the technology will be used in the majors.

'We need to see how it works, first in the Atlantic League and then probably other places, meaning other parts of minor league baseball, before it comes to Major League Baseball," Manfred said. "Kind of gets back to the question that I was asked earlier about the baseball, we hear all the time from players, why don't we have an electronic strike zone, why don't we have an electronic strike zone? We try to be responsive to those sorts of expressions of concern. We have spent a lot of time and money on the technology. It's not just to address player concerns. It obviously has broadcasting uses. That same technology can be used in our broadcast, which has value to our fans. But we feel it's incumbent upon us - people that play the game raised this as something that could make the game better. We kind of feel it's incumbent on us to figure out whether we could make it work. And that's what we're doing.

Tight free-agent market impacts **All-Star players**

By RONALD BLUM Associated Press

CLEVELAND - His free agency delayed a year because the Chicago Cubs kept him in the minor leagues for one extra day, Kris Bryant is the shining example of why players are agitating for change in their labor contract

Baseball has had labor peace following eight work stoppages from 1972-95, but the relationship between Major League Baseball and the union is strained as the current deal approaches its expiration in December 2021.

"I think people are prepared. I think we've very well-educated,' Bryant said Monday as NL All-Stars gathered in a room. "The problems are out on the board and I think the sides are kind of working towards not getting to that point. But I think everyone here in this room knows what's going on. There has to be change, and I think there will be.

Bryant debuted on April 17, 2015, leaving him one day shy of the service time needed to become a free agent after the 2020 season. The players' association filed a grievance in 2015, but the case has not been argued.

Houston pitcher Gerrit Cole becomes eligible for free agency this autumn after watching former teammate Dallas Keuchel and All-Star closer Craig Kimbrel sit out until June because they did not think any of the offers they received before then were appropriate.

As a higher percentage of free agents waited to sign until after spring training was underway. the average salary has stagnated at about \$4.1 million for three



Chicago Cubs third baseman Kris Bryant was called up on April 17, 2015, leaving him one day shy of the service time needed to become a free agent after the 2020 season. The current free-agent system has strained the relationship between teams and players.

lack of competition for free agents has hurt competition on the field, leading to an attendance drop. Management says there always has been rebuilding teams.

Mike Milwaukee infielder Mike Moustakas gets asked about his free-agent experience by other players. He rejected a \$17.4 million qualifying offer from Kansas City after the 2017 season and returned to the Royals in mid-March for a one-year contract that included a guaranteed \$6.5 million, and then earned an ad-ditional \$2.2 million in performance honuses

He became a free agent again and agreed in February to a \$10 million, one-year deal with the Brewers: a \$7 million salary this season and an \$11 million mutual ontion for 2020 with a \$3 million buyout. "It's pretty crazy to have Kim-

brel and Keuchel sign so late," Moustakas said. "Baseball needs those kind of guys playing. Those are two superstar players that need to be in the game.'

Astros outfielder George Springer played his first big league game on April 16, 2014, six days shy of being eligible for free agency after the 2020 season. He is among those angry over the treatment of free agents.

"We owe it to the fans to put the best product out of the field at all times," he said. "There's a lot of guys who work really, really hard to get to free agency, to get to that point, who deserve to get what

MLB agreed last winter to the union's request for an early start to negotiations on the next labor contract, but the pace of talks is similar to the pace of the game: slow. The sides have had a preliminary meeting to talk about scheduling more meetings.

"Hopefully stuff changes and we can back on the same page with Major League Baseball, somehow," said Los Angeles Angels infielder Tommy La Stella, also eligible for free agency after the 2020 season. "It seems a ways off but hopefully that dialogue is starting now and we can get something that works for everybody."

Minnesota's Jake Odorizzi is focused on pitching well for the rest of the season as he prepares to become a free agent after the World Series. Success on the mound increases the chance he could be elevated to an elite tier.

"The free-agent market, I think it's been very publicized recently, it's been a very different market than in years past," he said. "But there's always certain people that it doesn't really affect.



Miami Marlins' pitcher Sandy Alcantara was an All-Star this season, but the Marlins will likely suffer their 10th consecutive losing season. At 33-55, they easily have the worst record in the National League

Jeter's Marlins have makings of competitive team, but when?

By STEVEN WINE Associated Press

MIAMI - The Phillies had just become the latest visiting team to win a game in Miami, and from the top of baseball's food chain, \$330 million man Bryce Harper tried to be kind as he assessed the low-budget, low-expectation Marlins.

"They've got a good pitching staff," Harper said. 'They're young. They're energetic. It's going to be a good club.' But when?

For the rebuilding Marlins, this season is about trying to get closer to competitive, and in the standings there's little sign of progress.

Starting with a loss to Harper and the Phillies, the Marlins dropped six of their final seven games before the All-Star break, which left their record at 33-55 by far the worst in the National League. The Marlins are assured of their 10th consecutive losing season, and even by the franchise's low standards, this season's .375 winning percentage is bad.

At the break a year ago, they were 41-57 (.418). Two years ago, shortly before CEO Derek Jeter's group bought the franchise and began to reboot, the Marlins reached the break at 41-46 (.471). They are on pace for only the third 100-loss season in team history, and the first since 2013.

This is improvement?

Maybe.

There are reasons for encouragement. Young starters Sandy Alcantara, Caleb Smith, Pablo Lopez, Trevor Richards and Jordan Yamamoto have all showed signs they can be part of a winning staff, and the rotation ranks seventh in the majors with an ERA of 3.86. Alcantara made the All-Star team. and Yamamoto has been a pleasant surprise, going 3-0 with a 1.24 ERA in his first five major league

Performances have been spottier among everyday players, with first baseman Garrett Cooper (.848 OPS in 186 at-bats) and catcher Jorge Alfaro (.274 batting average) giving the strongest indication they should be part of Jeter's long-term plan.

The Marlins rank last in the NL in runs, triples, homers, walks, on-base percentage and slugging. And while Jeter's group has made progress in efforts to fortify the farm system, there appears to be little imminent offensive help in the pipeline.

Miami has showed improvement of late merely by being mediocre. Despite stumbling into the break, the Marlins are 23-24 since mid-May. That's after a 10-31 start.

"When you have a young club that's building, you just want to see them get better all the time," manager Don Mattingly said following the final home game before the break. "I feel like we're just getting

a little bit better all the time." But there's a long way to go to reach Jeter's goal of

becoming a perennial championship contender, Matting-We're ly acknowledged.

happy that we're getting better, but we're still sitting here with the record we have, and we have to get better. 7

Don Mattingly Marlins manager against the Brayes and 3-10 against the Nationals. Then there is the chronic problem of attendance. The Marlins are headed for the

'We're not trying to build a

team that's kind of competi-

tive," Mattingly said. "We're

happy that we're getting bet-

ter, but we're still sitting here

with the record we have, and

never won a division title, the

gap between the Marlins and

the best of the NL East appears yawning. They are 7-6

against the Phillies but 2-10

For a franchise that has

we have to get better.

NL's lowest average in 15 seasons at 9,402 fans per home game. They are on pace to finish last in the league in attendance for the 14th time in the past 15 years. Players are so accustomed to small crowds that shortstop Miguel Roias raved about the atmosphere after the Marlins drew

a modest 14,774 for their most recent home victory. "It was amazing," Rojas said. "Hopefully the fans get the sense this team is doing great things, and

they keep coming on an everyday basis. The next afternoon, when the home team lost, the seats were two-thirds empty as usual. Midway through the second season of the Jeter regime. doubters still outnumber believers.

Nationals take steps toward contention

After sluggish start, team is in rhythm and 2nd in NL East

By Stephen Whyno Associated Press

WASHINGTON weeks ago, the Washington Nationals didn't have much to dance

They were 12 games below .500 with the fourth-worst record in baseball. They weren't giving ace Max Scherzer and Co. enough run support, and the bullpen was a ticking time bomb to another deflating loss.

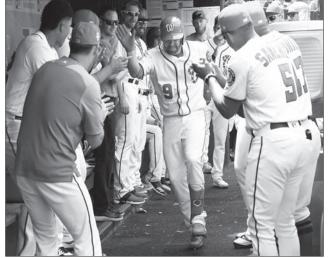
"Any way we could lose a game, we found a way to do it,' first baseman Ryan Zimmerman said. "Then you go to New York and get swept, lose four games in a row, you feel like you're at rock bottom."

Since waking up at rock bottom on May 24, the Nationals have gone a major league-best 28-11 to vault into playoff contention. With its combination of power hitting, stellar starting pitching and some dance parties in the dugout. Washington can legitimately think about playing into October and challenging the Atlanta Braves for NL East supremacy.

"We know the guys in this clubhouse are very talented," Scher-zer said. "When we can go out there and play our best baseball and play mistake-free baseball, we're a tough team and we can compete with anybody in this league.'

Scherzer and fellow starters Stephen Strasburg and Patrick Corbin are at the center of this renaissance. They are the only three teammates in NL history to each post 125 strikeouts before the All-Star break, and Scherzer is 7-0 with a 0.48 ERA in his past nine starts dating to mid-May.

No. 4 starter Anibal Sanchez is 5-0 with a 2.18 ERA since returning from the injured list, and the rotation has been good enough to limit the innings a shaky bullpen needs to throw



The Nationals' Brian Dozier, center, dances to celebrate his home run as teammates watch during the

"When you can ask your starting pitching to give you seven innings every outing, that's in-credible," manager Dave Martinez said. "They've done it all

year. You're just seeing the benefits now because the whole team's playing really well. It's been incredible.'

Even more incredible is the Nationals' home run hitting. They have gone yard in 21 consecutive games, the longest streak in franchise history and the longest active streak in the majors.

Each time a player hits a home run, it's all eyes on the dugout since May signee Gerardo Parra started a tradition of dances to celebrate the occasion. Last weekend, catcher Kurt Suzuki flossed and All-Star Anthony Rendon did a little jig with Parra before hugging him.

second inning of Washington's 5-2 victory over the Kansas City Royals on Sunday.

"I'm happy every day," Parra said. "The people right now just enjoy the moment." It was difficult to enjoy too

many moments in May, when Washington seemingly couldn't do anything right. After missing the playoffs last season, it looked like another long slog until Game

Martinez harped on the message of winning the next game rather than worrying about the hole his team needed to dig out of. Winning three of four against the bottom-feeding Miami Marlins and sweeping a two-game series at Atlanta began the turnaround.

"Everybody had a hand in why we were making mistakes and not playing winning baseball," Scherzer said. "We started playing better baseball, really cleaned up our act all the way around. Once we started clicking and started getting going, we eliminated a lot of

the mistakes and errors and just

made the other team heat us The Nationals hold an NL wildcard spot coming out of the All-Star break but are still six games behind first-place Atlanta. Seven of their next nine games are against the Braves or old friend Bryce Harper and the Philadelphia Phillies, but players believe the adversity they faced early on can only help them now.

"I love how we overcame a lot of things the first month and a half. ... We knew things had to turn and we made it happen," second baseBy the numbers

19-31

The Nationals opened the season 12 games below .500, the fourth-worst record in baseball.

28-11

The Nationals' record since May 24, the best record in baseball.

SOLIRCE: Associated Press

man Brian Dozier said. "It's still going to be a test, but at the same time we're playing really good baseball. I think the confidence and everything is back where it needs to be and everything's rolling pretty good."

With this success, don't expect the Nationals' dance party to stop. Even though he won't get involved because "I don't hit home runs." Martinez doesn't mind his players having a little fun in the confines of their dugout because it's not designed to show up any opponents.

If anything, it's a sign of a team that didn't let a lot of losing tear it apart and believes it has the rhythm to keep this winning roll

"One thing I know about this team is that they've stuck together through the bad times, even now through the good times," Martinez said. "They've been the same group since day one. The chemistry's always been there. Now all of a sudden, we're starting to play well and you can see them they're having fun. They re-

ally enjoy what they're doing and they're out there having fun."

Bouton, author of tell-all 'Ball Four,' dies

The Associated Press

GREAT BARRINGTON, Mass. — Jim Bouton. the former New York Yankees pitcher who shocked and angered the conservative baseball world with the tell-all book "Ball Four," has died. He was 80.

Bouton's family said he died Wednesday at the home he shared with wife Paula Kurman. He fought a brain disease linked to dementia and was in hospice care. Bouton also had two strokes in 2012.

Published in 1970, "Ball Four" detailed Yankees great Mickey Mantle's carousing, and the use of stimulants in the major leagues. Bouton's revealing look at baseball off the field made for eve-opening and entertaining reading, but he paid a big price for the best-seller when former teammates other players and executives across the big leagues ostracized him for exposing their secrets.

Throwing so hard that his cap flew off his head, Bouton was 21-8 with six shutouts in 1963 — his secand season in the majors - and went 18-13 with four more shutouts in 1964. The Yankees lost the World Series both years.

Bouton injured his right arm in 1965, goig 4-15 that season, and saw limited action the next three seasons with New York. He worked on "Ball Four" in 1969, a season spent with the expansion Seattle Pilots and Houston Astros, his fastball replaced by a knuckleball as he tried to prolong his career.

Bouton also pitched for Houston in 1970, and made a comeback with the Atlanta Braves in 1978, going 1-3 at age 39. He finished his 10-year career with a 62-63 record and 3.57 ERA.

Bouton was a television sportscaster in New York City with WABC and WCBS, wrote other books and starred in a 1976 CBS sitcom based on "Ball Four" that lasted only five episodes. He and a former teammate developed Big League Chew, a bubble gum alternative to chewing tobacco.



Jim Bouton, the former New York Yankees pitcher who shocked the conservative baseball world with the tell-all book "Ball Four." died on Wednesday, He was 80.

MIB

Scoreboard

American League **East Division** GB -6½ 9 Pct .648 .571 .544 .374 .303 57 52 49 34 27 31 39 41 57 62 New York Tampa Bay Boston Toronto Baltimore 33 38 44 61 57 Minnesota Cleveland 56 50 42 30 .629 Chicago Kansas City Detroit Houston Oakland Texas Los Angeles Seattle

National League

East Division												
W L Pct GB												
Atlanta	54	37	.593	_								
Washington	47	42	.528	6								
Philadelphia	47	43	.522	61/2								
New York	40	50	.444	131/2								
Miami	33	55	.375	191/2								
Central Division												
Chicago	47	43	.522	_								
Milwaukee	47	44	.516	1/2								
St. Louis	44	44	.500	2								
Pittsburgh	44	45	.494	21/2								
Cincinnati	41	46	.471	41/2								
West Division												
Los Angeles	60	32	.652	-								
Arizona	46	45	.505	131/2								
San Diego	45	45	.500	14								
Colorado	44	45	.494	141/2								
San Francisco	41	48	.461	171/2								
Tues	day's	game										

AL 4, NL 3 Thursday's game

Houston at Texas
Friday's games
Tampa Bay (Chirinos 7-4) at Baltimore

Bundy 4-10) Toronto (TBD) at N.Y. Yankees (TBD) L.A. Dodgers (TBD) at Boston (Rodri-uez 9-4) ez 9-4) Minnesota (Gibson 8-4) at Cleveland

(Clevinger 2-2) Houston (Cole 9-5) at Texas (Chavez 3-4) Detroit (TBD) at Kansas City (Duffy 3-

5)

Chicago White Sox (Nova 4-7) at Oak-land (Fires 8-3)
Chicago White Sox (Nova 4-7) at Cak-land (Fires 8-3)
Pittsburgh (Archer 3-6) at Chicago
Pittsburgh (Archer 3-6) at Chicago
Washington (Strasburg 10-4) at Phila-delphia (Pivetta 4-3)
San Francisco (Anderson 3-2) at Mil-waukee (TBD)
Arlzona (TBD) at St. Louis (Wainwright
Arlzona (TBD) at St. Louis (Wainwright

5-7) Cincinnati (Gray 5-5) at Colorado

(TBD)
Atlanta (Reuchel 2-2) at San Diego
(Lamtel 0-1)
Atlanta (Reuchel 2-2) at San Diego
(Lamtel 0-1)
Atlanta (Washington 1-1)
Atlanta (Washington Seattle at L.A. Angels Pittsburgh at Chicago Cubs N.Y. Mets at Miami Arizona at St. Louis San Francisco at Milwauk Washington at Philadelphia Cincinnati at Colorado Atlanta at San Diego

AL leaders

BATTING—LeMahieu, New York, .336; Brantley, Houston, .324; Devers, Boston, .324; Anderson, Chicago, .317; Polanco, Minnesota, .312; Alberto, Baltimore, .309; Moncada, Chicago, .308; Merrifield, Kansa .325 (tly, .306; Cabrera, Detroit, .304; Mar-

sas City, 369; Cabrera, Detroit, 304; Mar-inze, Boston, 304, Angeles, 67; Abreu, Chicago, 66; Bogaerts, Bostón, 65; LeMa-elleu, New York, 62; Bostana, 65; LeMa-deu, New York, 62; Bostana, 62; Boston, 62; Rosario, Minnesotta, Vork, 57; 2 tel dat 56. PITCHING—Giolito, Chicago, PITCHING—Giolito, Chicago, 12; Gonzales, Seattle, 10-7; Morton, Tampa Bay, 10-2; Odorizzi, Minnesotta, 10-4; Ver-lander, Houston, 10-4; Stel ad, 10-4; Ver-

NL leaders

AL leaders

AL Leaders

AL Leaders

Bellinging - Michighe - Michig

67; 5 tied at 62. PITCHING—Greinke, Arizona, 10-3; Ryu, Los Angeles, 10-2; Strasburg, Washington, 10-4; Woodruff, Milwaukee, 10-3; Fried, Atlanta, 9-4; Gray, Colorado, 9-6; Scherzer, Washington, 9-5; Soroka, At-lanta, 9-1; 6 tied at 8.

Losses mount for 0's manager

By DAVID GINSBURG Associated Press

BALTIMORE - There might come a time when Brandon Hyde wakes up in the morning, grabs a newspaper and finds the Baltimore Orioles in the standings.

For now, the rookie manager simply can't bear to look.

The rebuilding Orioles limped into the All-Star break with a major league worst 27-62 record. During a particular brutal stretch in late June, Baltimore showed its youth and inexperience while losing 13 of 14 games - including blowouts of 12-3, 13-2, 16-2 and

Asked at that point to present his goal for this season, Hyde replied, "I'll be honest with you — I have no idea what our record is I don't even want to look at it. Right now, it's about developing these guys and how we play. Eventually, I'm going to be looking at the standings and it's going to be about wins and losses.

Until then, Hyde will have to grit his teeth when his outfielders throw to the wrong base, players get picked off and his pitching staff gets rocked. Baltimore is allowing a major league high 6.07 runs per game and has lost 26 times by at least five runs.

"We are getting by as best as we can," Hyde said. "We're not in an ideal situation. I think those numbers kind of show you where we are.

Rookie left-hander John Means (7-4, 2.50 ERA) made the All-Star team and Andrew Cashner (9-3, 3.83) has benefited from solid run support, but the rest of the rotation has struggled. A season-ending injury to opening day starter Alex Cobb was particularly devastating because there was no adequate replacement.



THE INCORPONATE

Rookie manager Brandon Hyde and the rebuilding Orioles limped into the All-Star break with a major league worst 27-62 record.

"We've had some injuries that have hurt us. As an organization, we're just not loaded with depth at the upper levels," Hyde said. "We will be. There's going to be some hope in sight, but right now we're going with what we have.'

David Hess, Dan Staily and Gabriel Ynoa were given a shot at starting, and all of them failed. Using an opener - a relief pitcher to begin the game — isn't really an option because of the strain in puts on an inconsistent bullpen.

"For a team to do it successfully, you have a starter going after the opener. We don't have that," Hyde conceded. "Whenever we try that. it seems like the second pitcher is gone in the fourth. Now you've got somebody else going in. So it's a real touchy, dicey situation."

Hyde came to Baltimore after helping the Chicago Cubs develop from a last-place team into a World Series champion. He figured there would be similar

growing pains with the Orioles. "It's been challenging, there's no doubt. I knew going in this was not going to be easy," Hyde said.

Starter Dylan Bundy, who's logging an unsightly 4-10 record, said. "We knew what we were getting at spring training. We've got a bunch of guys who are young and trying to find their way through the major leagues."

The Orioles closed the first half by winning five of nine, including successive 13-0 routs over Cleveland. That provided hope that the team could at least outdo a 47-115 finish last year that brought about an overhaul in which Hyde replaced Buck Showalter and Mike Elias took over for Dan Duquette as general manager.

Baltimore began the season by winning a series at Yankee Stadium and one in Toronto before slumping into its current

"There's still time to get back on track, get back to where we were earlier in the year and even better than that," said Trey Mancini, one of the few budding stars in a starting lineup that features Rule 5 shortstop Richie Martin (.166 batting average) and rookie center fielder Stevie Wilkerson

Struggling Chris Davis is only halfway through a \$161 million, seven-year contract. Fortunately, his lack of production has been partly offset by third baseman Renato Nunez, who's hit 20 homers in his first season as an everyday starter.

The effort level is there, the intensity is there," Mancini said. "But the execution isn't there."

That's what happens when a franchise slashes the payroll by cutting ties with stars such as Manny Machado and Zach Britton and starts anew.

"I know that it's difficult. Maybe some teams have to do it, and I understand it," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "We're trying to thread the needle where we don't do that and still win. It's not easy. They're also in a very tough division, the AL East, so it's hard. When people my age talk about Baltimore, it's one of the better baseball towns, so I'm sure it's tough on the fans."

Elias signed the No. 1 pick in the June draft, catcher Adley Rutschman, and plucked 27 players from the International Draft Help may be on the way, but not soon enough to turn things around this season.

"This year is about finding out uys that we're going to move forward with, guys establishing themselves as major league play-ers," Hyde said. "We're taking our lumps because it."

Look: Deadline trades could shake up playoff races

Cincinnati. Yup, that's right, it's just 41/2 games from top to bottom, with Christian Yelich and Milwaukee a half-game back of Javier Baez and the inconsistent Cubbies.

"Nobody really wants to run away with it," Cardinals shortstop Paul DeJong said, "That gives us confidence as a group to think that we can run away with it."

It sets up for some very tough decisions ahead of the trade deadline after trade waivers were eliminated in the offseason, meaning no player can be traded after July 31 through the end of the regular season. Players who clear outright waivers can still be claimed and will be eligible for the postseason if they are in the organization before Sept. 1.

Buying or selling will be one tricky call for several teams, all the way to the final days of July. The hard deadline also could affect the prices for some of the top players on the market, possibilities like San Francisco pitchers Madison Bumgarner and Will Smith, Toronto right-hander Marcus Stroman and Detroit lefty Matthew Boyd.

"I know something could happen, but I don't take a peek at what people are saying," Smith said. "There's so much out there, and you don't know what's true."

Cleveland could inject some drama into the

AT. Central as soon as this weekend when Minnesota comes to town for a three-game series. The Indians hit the All-Star break with the majors' longest active win streak at six in a row, improving to 21-6 since June 1 and moving within 51/2 games of the divisionleading Twins.

"In the beginning it seemed like we were good, then all of a sudden in May we had that stretch where we weren't playing as good as we wanted to play," Lindor said. "But right now, we continue to play the game right and we're enjoying it, we're all having fun. We all get along, we love each other, we back each other up. We're having a blast."

Washington also is having some fun again, moving into position to shake up the NL East after a terrible start. Led by a resurgent Scherzer, the Nats have won 15 of 19 to pull within six games of the division-leading Braves.

Washington plays Atlanta 14 times in the last half of the season, including seven games in July

"When we can go out there and play our best baseball and play mistake-free baseball, we're a tough team and we can compete with anybody in this league," Scherzer said.

The Nationals have seven players with at least 11 homers, led by Anthony Rendon with 20. But everyone is going deep these days.



Giants ace Madison Bumgamer could be on the move before the July 31trade deadline.

Beginning with Thursday night's Astros-Rangers game in Arlington, the game's top sluggers resume their assault on an array of home run records. Yelich leads the way with 31 so far, putting together an appropriate en-

core to his NL MVP performance a year ago. The majors are on pace for 6,668 homers, which would smash the 2017 record of 6.105.

"Guys are working year in and year out on their swings," Pittsburgh first baseman Josh Bell said during the All-Star break. "We're just focused on trying to put a show on for you

Party of five

Don't write off any NL Central team

By WILL GRAVES Associated Press

oe Maddon didn't let the free time created by a rare ejection go to waste.

Shortly after getting tossed by home-plate umpire Joe West on July 4 following an outburst in which the Chicago Cubs manager appeared ready to take on any and all comers from the Pittsburgh dugout after taking exception to the way the Pirates kept pitching up and in to his players, Maddon retired to the visiting manager's office at PNC Park. He eased into a chair, opened a bottle of wine, flipped on the television and watched his wildly uneven team put the finishing touches on an 11-3 victory that avoided a four-game sweep.

Opportunities Veteran move. to relax over the next two-plus months will be scarce in the most competitive division in the majors.

The National League Central enters the second half with the first-place Cubs and last-place Cincinnati separated by just 4½ games, an outlier during an otherwise yawn-inducing first half in which five divisions reached the All-Star break with at least a 51/2-game gap between first and second.

are no front-runners There in the NL Central. No room to breathe, either - something Maddon saw coming long ago.

"I've been talking about this for the last two years, how teams are getting better in our division," Maddon said. "It's not going to go away. It's going to be really diffi-cult to really separate, especially by the fact that everybody is catching up right now. The second half is going to be very similar to what you've seen in the first half.'

Exactly what the Reds had in mind when they retooled over the winter in an effort to stop a streak of four straight 90-loss seasons.

Cincinnati upgraded its starting rotation over the winter, added *Nobody has a dash (OK, maybe dug a hole for more than a dash) of swagger when it acquired outfielder themselves. and I think Yaisel Puig from the Los Angeles Dodgers every team and overcame a shaky feels good 1-8 start to stay within about that in striking distance in a division in which susour division tained momentum has for sure." been nonexistent.

"We're in it," Reds second baseman Scooter Gennett said. "It's pretty close, pretty tight. There's plenty of time to

make a run." Maybe, but that will require one team in the Central finding a way to get the better of the other four on a consistent basis. That didn't happen in the first half. Milwau-



Yasiel Puig and the Reds overcame a 1-8 start to move within striking distance of the 4½ game

Standings

			FUL		
Chicago	47	43	.522		
Milwaukee	47	44	.516		
St. Louis	44	44	.500	2	
Pittsburgh	44	45	.494	21/2	

kee is the only NL Central team with a winning record within the division (24-18) but has been unable to create any separation.

"It doesn't make me comfortable that we've been spotty," Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. "The division, we haven't, nobody has jumped out. Somebody will. It almost has to happen that some team is going to start playing really well. Nobody has dug a hole for themselves, and I think every team feels good about that in our division for sure.'

First place, after all, is only a week-long hot streak away. Not so much in the NL

West where the Los Angeles Dodgers have smashed their way to a 131/2- game lead — or the NL East where Atlanta's young core has given the Braves a healthy six-game cushion over Washington. "You can slow it

way down knowing that we're only a few games back," Car-dinals infielder Paul Craig Counsell deJong said. "Today's Brewers manager important, so we're focusing on today. We're

not thinking, 'Oh, we're 71/2 back and we've got to win 10 in a row.' All of a sudden you're thinking 10 games ahead and not focusing on winning today. For us with the small deficit or small lead, every game's important so it locks us in

And leaves each team with some interesting decisions to make as the trade deadline approaches. The resilient Pirates entered

the break just 21/2 games behind the Cubs despite having 80 percent of its starting rotation spend time on the injured list at some point over the last three months. All-Star first baseman Josh Bell's breakout season has helped. So has the impact of rookie outfielder Bryan Reynolds and rookie infielder Kevin Newman.

"We feel like we're here for the fight," Bell said. "We're ready for it. I like the guys that we have. We trust ourselves to be celebrating at the end of the season."

Then again, so does everyone else, which is one of the reasons the Central is so competitive. No one is rebuilding or transitioning from one core to the next.

"Each of us has our flaws but there's a deep level of talent in this division, and you do, you have five teams that their ambition is to make the postseason," Pittsburgh general manager Neal Hunting-ton said. "That's not the case in some of the other divisions. That's not criticism. Teams cycle in and cycle out. It's part of the industry. It's part of the game. It's been part of the game for decades.

AP sports writer Joe Kay in Cincinnati contributed to this report



Above: Chicago Cubs manager Joe Maddon, center, yells toward the Pirates dugout as he is restrained by umpire Joe West, left, and the Cubs' Kris Bryant during the fourth inning on July 4 in Pittsburgh. Below: Pirates first baseman celebrates in the dugout after hitting a three-run home run against the Milwaukee Brewers on July 5.



WIMBLEDON

Serena, Halep reach final

Williams again on verge of 24th Grand Slam title

By Howard Fendrich Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England - Serena Williams made it look easy in the Wimbledon semifinals. What she really cares about, of course, is what comes next

That's why she puts in all the work. Why she keeps at it with everything she's already won, everything she's already accomplished.

Williams is once again on the verge of an eighth Wimbledon championship and 24th Grand Slam title, moving into the final at the All England Club with a 6-1. 6-2 victory over an overmatched Barbora Strycova of the Czech Republic on Thursday.

On Saturday, Williams will take on No. 7-seeded Simona Halep of Romania, a 6-1, 6-3 winner over No. 8 Elina Svitolina of Ukraine under a cloudy sky at Centre Court

It'll be the 11th final at the All England Club for Williams and the first for Halep, whose only major trophy came at the French Open last year.

"I look forward to it," Williams

Why wouldn't she? She owns a 9-1 career record against Halep, including a victory in the Australian Open's fourth round in January.

Still, the 37-year-old American also knows that she's been this close to No. 24 before: In 2018, her first season back on tour after the birth of her daughter, Olympia, Williams reached the finals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open but lost each time.

That has left her Grand Slam total at 23, a record for the professional era and one fewer than Margaret Court accumulated while playing part of her career against amateur competition.
"I have a great job and I love

what I do," Williams said, "and I'm still pretty good at what I do, I guess.

It's been an up-and-down year because of illness and injury, limiting Williams to 12 matches until last week. After a third-round loss at Roland Garros on June 1, she stayed in France for medical treatment and finally felt painfree while preparing for Wimbledon in England.

"It's definitely a lot better" Williams said, "Every match, I know that I'm improving."

After a three-set against Alison Riske in the quarterfinals Tuesday, Williams was at her dominant best against Strycova, who appeared limited by some sort of issue with her right leg. As it is, the 33-year-old Strycova was the oldest first-time Grand Slam semifinalist in the professional era.

Williams played cleanly, accumulating nearly twice as many winners as unforced errors, 28-10. She was at her usual court-covering best, which helped limit Strycova to 10 winners. And Williams played calmly.

The semifinal's turning point came quickly. Ahead 2-1 in the first set while Strycova served at 30-all, Williams sailed a backhand return way long and let out a cry of "Aaah!"

Maybe that got her going, because she simply took over.

Williams took the next point with a swinging forehand volley winner on the 16th stroke, then one after that when Strycova's mediocre drop shot landed in the net. Having offered up a break point, Strycova crouched at the baseline and rested her racket on

A cross-court forehand passing shot delivered the break for Williams, and Strycova bent over

she was dealing with something physical.

The runaway was on: Williams seized seven points in a row and 16 of 20 to close out that set.

Strycova would repeatedly flex or shake her legs between points or try to stretch in her sideline chair by pulling her right foot onto her left knee and rocking her leg. Nothing was going to help her slow down Williams on this afternoon, and the match was over after 59 minutes.

Halep seemed headed for a long day when her semifinal against Svitolina began with a pair of games encompassing 32 points across 20 minutes.

Halep excels at this type of play, more frequently seen on clay courts than grass, and soon enough was on her way to her fifth Grand Slam final.

Like Strycova, Svitolina never had been to the final four at any Slam. Svitolina made things competitive enough at the outset.

Five of the first 11 points lasted at least 10 strokes; two went 23.

Svitolina even earned three break chances in that opening game, but Halep eventually held there on the 16th point. Another game of the same length followed. and there again were three break points, except the difference was that Halep converted her last when Svitolina pushed a backhand wide.

While Svitolina would break back at love, that was pretty much the end of her challenge to Halep, who scrambled to cover the court so well, took balls early and created angles that earned her points.

played unbelievable today," Svitolina said. "She was moving really good, striking the ball perfectly.



Shown after their classic Wimbledon final in 2008, Rafael Nadal, left, shakes hands with Roger Federer. They meet in the semifinals.

Federer, Nadal renewing rivalry

By HOWARD FENDRICH Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England - All these years later, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal will meet again at Wimbledon for the 40th installment of their terrific rivalry and first at the All England Club since their memorable 2008

"Such a long time," Nadal said. Nadal leads 25-14. It's their 14th match at a major; Nadal leads 10-3. And it's the fourth time they'll play at Centre Court; Federer leads 2-1

They moved on to the semifinal showdown everyone's been thinking about since the tournament draw by each overcoming a tough opening set Wednesday.

A 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Kei Nishikori gave the No. 2seeded Federer his 100th match win at the All England Club, the first man to reach that total at any Grand Slam tournament, Not long after that ended on Centre Court, the No. 3-seeded Nadal finished off Sam Querrey 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 at No. 1 Court.

Friday's other semifinal will draw far less attention: No. 1. Novak Djokovic, the defending champion, against No. 23 Roberto Bautista Agut, who has never before gone this far at a major.

Looking ahead to what comes next for himself, Federer said: "Obviously, I know people always hype it up."
Well, why shouldn't they?

These are, after all, two of the greatest players in tennis' long history, winners of more Grand Slam titles than any other men. Of Federer's 20, a record eight came at Wimbledon. Of Nadal's 18, 12 came at the French Open, where he routed Federer in the semifinals last month.

That gave Nadal a 24-15 career edge head-to-head, including 10-3 at the Slams.

But that one was on the red clay Nadal rules. This one is on Federer's territory: grass.

This is their fourth matchup at Wimbledon — and first that won't come in the final. Federer beat Nadal for the 2006 and 2007 titles, but Nadal won the championship 11 years ago in a 9-7 fifth set as dusk descended.

"Well, we have a lot of information on Rafa, and so does he about us." Federer said. "So vou can either dive into tactics and all that stuff like mad for two days - or you're just going to say: 'You know what? It's grass-court tennis and I'm going to come out there and play attacking tennis.' And if he can defend that, that's too good. And if he can't, well, then, that's good for me

It is the 13th time that the Big Three of Federer, Nadal and Djokovic are in the semifinals at a major tournament together. On 11 of the previous occasions, one of them claimed the title.

This terrific trio has won 53 of the last 64 major championships. That includes 14 of the past 16 at Wimbledon

"Overall, I'm just very happy how I'm hitting the ball," Federer said, "Feel good off the baseline, too, which is clearly going to be important, maybe, for the next match

Nadal, of course, is still a ballretrieving, shot-whipping ma-chine at the back of the court.

Djokovic, eyeing a fifth trophy at the All England Club and 16th overall at Slams, meets Bautista Agut, who is supposed to be on the island of Ibiza right now, having a bachelor party with a halfdozen pals ahead of his November wedding. Instead, he will play on after beating No. 26 Guido Pella of Argentina 7-5, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

"Well," the 31-year-old Bautista Agut said, "it feels better to be here in London.

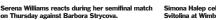
Federer and Nadal are surely pleased to still be around, too.

Everyone else will be thrilled to see them trade strokes on Centre Court once more.

"I know they haven't played here in a long time. It seems a little more exciting, more special, they are playing at Wimbledon, maybe, rather than outside of a Grand Slam," Querrey said. "I'll be watching on Friday.



on Thursday against Barbora Strycova.





Simona Halep celebrates after beating Elina Svitolina at Wimbledon on Thursday.

SPORTS



Serena cruises into final

Williams to meet Halep for chance at her 8th title » Page 63

MLB

Looking ahead

Trade deadline looms, races to heat up as baseball resumes after break

> By JAY COHEN Associated Press

rancisco Lindor and the Cleveland Indians, looking up at Nelson Cruz and the surpris ing Minnesota Twins. Matt Chapman and the Oakland Athletics, trying to run down Jose Altuve and the Houston Astros. Max Scherzer and the Washington Nationals, chasing Ronald Acuna Jr. and the Atlanta Braves.

Baseball ramps up again this weekend, and a handful of contenders have a lot of work to

Five of the majors' six divisions feature deficits of at least 51/2 games as play resumes after the All-Star Game, in which the American League beat the National League 4-3 Tuesday night.

Life is pretty good for two iconic franchises, with Cody Bellinger and the Los Angeles Dodgers in control of the NL West again and Aaron Judge and the New York Yankees looking down on the rest of the AL East despite a rash of injuries.

"This team is capable of some great things," Yankees pitcher James Paxton said. "You've got some really talented players here, guys with a lot of drive, great leadership. We're set up really well to make a good run the second half here as well."

The one exception at the moment is the crazy NL Central, where the Chicago Cubs have a 41/2 -game advantage - over last-place

SEE LOOK ON PAGE 61

The Twins'

Nelson Cruz

Inside:

is hoping to keep the surging Nationals in playoff contention

during the second half of the season. DUANE BURLESON/AP

All-Stars among those affected by changed free-agent market, Page 59

Ex-Yankee. 'Ball Four' author dies. Page 60

> The Indians Francisco Lindor

'Robot umpires' make pro baseball debut » Page 58